DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 401 214 SO 026 993

AUTHOR	Rhoodie, Nic, Ed.; Liebenberg, Ian, Ed.
TITLE	Democratic Nation-Building in South Africa.
INSTITUTION	Human Sciences Research Council, Pretoria (South Africa).
REPORT NO	ISBN-0-7969-1575-X
PUB DATE	94
NOTE	470p.
AVAILABLE FROM	Human Sciences Research Council, 134 Pretorius Street, Pretoria 0002, South Africa.
PUB TYPE	Books (010) -- Collected Works - General (020)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC19 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Change Strategies; Community Development; *Democracy; *Democratic Values; *Developing Nations; Foreign Countries; *Social Change; Social Values
IDENTIFIERS	*South Africa

ABSTRACT

This book is a collection of essays by 50 eminent experts/analysts representing a broad range of ideological perspectives and interest groups. Its aim is to contribute to the process of democratic nation-building and the creation of a culture of tolerance by educating South Africans about the intricacies of community reconciliation and nation-building. Following a section featuring information about each of the contributing authors, the book is divided into 11 sections, which are further divided into 47 chapters. The main sections are: (1) "Nation-Building as a Democratic Means of Reconciling National Unity with Ethnic and Cultural Diversity"; (2) "The Role of Ethnic Nationalism in Nation-Building"; (3) "The Constitutional and Institutional Bases of Democratic Government in South Africa"; (4) "The Sociopolitical Conditions for Democratic Nation-Building and Intercommunity Reconciliation"; (5) "Key Socioeconomic Determinants of Democratic Nation-Building in South Africa"; (6) "The Transition from Apartheid to Democracy"; (7) "Gender Equality as a Precondition for Democratic Nation-Building"; (8) "Violence--A Pervasive Inhibitor of Nation-Building"; (9) "The Role of the Security Institutions"; (10) "International Involvement in Nation-Building"; and (11) "Concluding Overview: the Prospects for Democratic Nation-Building in South Africa." (LAP)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED 401 214

SO 026 993

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND
DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL
HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

J.G. Garbers

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES
INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION
CENTER (ERIC)

☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

● Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

[illegible]

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Democratic nation-building in South Africa

Democratic nation-building in South Africa

Editors:
Nic Rhoodie
Ian Liebenberg

HSRC Publishers
PRETORIA
1994

© The authors, 1994

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopy, recording or any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publisher.

ISBN 0-7969-1575-X

The views expressed in this book are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the HSRC.

Published by
HSRC Publishers
134 Pretorius Street
PRETORIA
0002

Electronic data capture: Mari Nel
Cover design: Glenn Basson
Printed and bound by: Sigma Press (Pty) Ltd, Pretoria

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTING AUTHORS

HERIBERT ADAM: Heribert Adam is Professor of Sociology at Simon Fraser University, Vancouver, and also holds a regular visiting appointment at the University of Cape Town. He was educated at the Frankfurt School of Critical Theory and is the past president of the International Sociological Association's Research Committee on Ethnic, Minority, and Race Relations. His latest book, together with Kogila Moodley, is *The Negotiated Revolution* (Johannesburg: Jonathan Ball, 1993).

NEVILLE EDWARD ALEXANDER: Neville Alexander studied at the Universities of Cape Town and Tübingen (where he obtained a Ph.D.). He has published numerous articles on history and politics. He has also taught in high schools and at the University of Cape Town. He is associated with the South African Council for Higher Education and was Director of its Cape Town Centre. Dr Alexander is currently a trustee of HEWSA (Health, Education, Welfare Society of South Africa).

C.W.H. BOSHOFF: Professor Carel Boshoff was Professor and Head of the Department of Missiology and Religious Science at the University of Pretoria. Since 1988 he has been full-time chairman of the Afrikaner Freedom Foundation (AVSTIG), the Afrikaner Volkswag and SABRA, promoting an Afrikaner Volkstaat on democratic principles in the North Cape region.

CAREL BOSHOFF: Carel Boshoff (IV) is Head of Research for AVSTIG. He concentrates on the present negotiations and on an Afrikaner Volkstaat as a negotiable alternative to ethnic conflict in South Africa. Formulating his views in radical democratic terms, he is the author of *Afrikaners ná Apartheid* and is at present working on a doctoral thesis in Philosophy at the University of Pretoria.

W.J. BREYTENBACH: Willie Breytenbach is Professor of African Politics at the University of Stellenbosch. He was previously Director of Constitutional Planning in the Department of Constitutional Development and Planning in Pretoria. He held the same position in the Office of the Prime Minister. Before that he was employed by the University of Pretoria, the Africa Institute and the SA Foundation. He holds degrees in Africa Studies, Applied Anthropology, Anthropology, Political Science and Development Administration. He also spent some time in Israel as a research fellow at the Harry S Truman Institute, Hebrew University of Jerusalem. He has participated in various conferences abroad in 1991, and was invited to testify before the Commonwealth Foreign Ministers in New Delhi on the issue of the removal of sanctions. He was also a participant in the first Anglo/Soviet/South African meeting on global prospects for peace and stability in London in 1988.

J.K. CILLIERS: Dr J.K. (Jakkie) Cilliers obtained a D.Litt. et Phil. in Strategic Studies at UNISA in 1987. He has had 14 years military service in the SADF. His service record includes extensive operational deployment as an artillery officer and various staff postings, in Pretoria. Awards and decorations include the following: Bronze Medal from the South African Society for the Advancement of Science; H. Bradlow Research Bursary; Southern Cross Medal and Chief of the SA Defence Force Commendation Medal. From 1988 to 1991 he served as the divisional manager of operations research at Analysis, Management and Systems (Pty.) Ltd. He is currently the Executive Director of the Institute for Defence Policy founded in 1991. Dr Cilliers has read numerous papers at conferences and seminars and is a regular commentator on local and international radio and television. He lectures regularly on defence policy issues and has published widely in this field.

JACKLYN COCK: Jacklyn Cock is an Associate Professor in the Department of Sociology at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. She holds degrees in Political Science, History and Sociology. She has written extensively on the situation of different social groups excluded from power and resources in South Africa such as black women, domestic workers, disabled black people, disposed farm workers, the educationally disadvantaged, etc.

C.P. DE KOCK: Chris de Kock holds a D.Litt. et Phil. degree from the University of South Africa. He is at present a Chief Research Specialist in the Human Sciences Research Council's Division for Sociopolitical Monitoring and Analysis. Dr De Kock is a political sociologist whose main interest is intergroup conflict and the violent manifestations of conflict fields in which he is a recognised expert.

OSCAR D. DHLOMO: Oscar Dumisani Dhlomo obtained the degree of Doctor of Education from the University of South Africa in 1980. He entered politics in 1978 and occupied various influential positions until 1990, when he resigned from politics. In 1991 he founded the Institute for Multi-party Democracy of which he is the Executive Chairman. The aim of the Institute is the promotion of multiparty democracy, political tolerance and national reconciliation in South Africa. Dr Dhlomo has written extensively on political issues. He is a respected independent political commentator and writes a regular column for certain South African newspapers. He is a director of a number of major South African companies.

LOURENS M. DU PLESSIS: Lourens M. du Plessis is a Professor in the Department of Public Law at the University of Stellenbosch and Professor Extraordinary in the Department of Comparative and Public International Law at the University of the Western Cape. He was the Convenor of the Technical Committee on Fundamental Rights during the Multiparty Negotiating Process at the World Trade Centre, Kempton Park.

IRINA FILATOVA: Irina Filatova is Professor and Head of the Department of History at the University of Durban-Westville. She is a former Professor and Head of the African Studies Department of Moscow State University. She holds a Ph.D. from Moscow State University and has authored two books and many articles on African and South African History. She was research fellow at Yale University (1990-1991), and 9th Bradlow fellow at the South African Institute of International Affairs.

STEVEN FRIEDMAN: Steven Friedman is Director of the Centre for Policy Studies in Johannesburg, an autonomous project under the aegis of the Human Sciences Research Council. Associated with the South African Institute of Race Relations, the Institute for Multiparty Democracy, the Urban Foundation and the Development Bank of Southern Africa, he has written extensively on contemporary political and social issues.

DEON GELDENHUYS: Deon Geldenhuys is Professor of Political Studies at the Rand Afrikaans University (RAU). He specializes in international relations, particularly in the context of current sociopolitical developments in South Africa.

AMANDA GOUWS: Amanda Gouws is a Senior Lecturer in Political Science at the University of Stellenbosch. She holds a Ph.D. from the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana, USA, where she specialized in gender politics and political behaviour. She is presently chairing a committee researching sexual harassment among students at the University of Stellenbosch.

P.J. HAASBROEK: Dr Pieter Haasbroek joined the Barlows Group of Companies as an economist after an academic career culminating in a professorship in Economics at the University of Pretoria. A member of the Council for Population Development he has published widely on economic issues and serves on a number of public committees.

H.P. LANGENHOVEN: Henk Langenhoven has worked as an economics policy analyst and lecturer in economics. He is at present a senior economics analyst at the South African Federation of Civil Engineering Contractors (SAFCEC), which he represents in various governmental and private sector bodies. The views expressed in his contribution are not necessarily those of SAFCEC.

JOE LATAKGOMO: Joe Latakgomo is Deputy Editor of the Argus Africa News Service, which provides news coverage of Africa for the Argus Group of newspapers. He was formerly Senior Assistant Editor of the *Star* and Founding Editor of the *Sowetan.*

ERICH LEISTNER: Erich Leistner is a resident fellow of the Africa Institute of South Africa, which he headed until 1991. Dr Leistner's interests revolve around the economic development of sub-Saharan Africa, especially issues of aid and regional development.

IAN LIEBENBERG: Ian Liebenberg holds degrees in Philosophy (US) and Political Science (US) and was a former Director of Research at the Institute for a Democratic Alternative for South Africa (IDASA). He is at present a Senior Researcher in the Centre for Constitutional Analysis of the HSRC. His main interests focus on democratization and constitutional analysis. He has produced several articles in these fields including a book *Ideologie in Konflik and co-edited The Hidden Hand: Covert Operations in South Africa.*

CHARLES MALAN: Charles Malan, D.Litt., is Chief Research Specialist in the Group Social Dynamics of the HSRC. He is research leader of programmes on national symbols and intercultural dialogue. As author and (co-)editor he has published 28 books and monographs and 83 articles on cultural studies, sociocultural reconstruction, literature, national symbols and related topics.

ROBERT B. MATTES: Robert Mattes teaches politics at the University of Cape Town, and received a Ph.D. from the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign (USA) in 1992. His interests lie in comparative democratic institutions, and he has recently completed a manuscript on the political impact of public opinion polling in the United States, as well as an article on the role of a separation of powers in a new South African constitution.

TITO MBOWENI: Tito Mboweni is Deputy Head of the Department of Economic Planning (DEP) in the ANC as well as Coordinator for Trade and Industrial Policy within the DEP. He holds a B.A. in Economics from the National University of Lesotho and an M.A. in Development Economics from the University of East Anglia in Norwich, England. Mr Mboweni joined the ANC in 1980 and has been a functionary of this body in different capacities since then. His research interests are industrial organisation (e.g. anti-trust, monopolies and mergers).

FATIMA MEER: Fatima Meer is Director of the Institute for Black Research at the University of Natal (Durban). Professor Meer has lectured at numerous universities abroad. She was appointed Visiting Cornel Professor at Swarthmore, USA, in 1984 and was Professor in International Relations and Peace at the Oregon University in the USA in 1990. She has delivered more than 170 papers locally and internationally, of which 30 have been published. She has also published 19 books, prominent among them, the authorised biography of Nelson Mandela, *Higher than Hope.*

GABI MEYER: Gabi Meyer (M.A., University of Cape Town) has worked at the Centre for Intergroup Studies since 1983 as a bibliographer, editorial assistant, and librarian in charge of the Resource Centre on Conflict and Peace Studies. She is also Associate Editor of the Centre's quarterly periodical *Track Two.*

PRINCE MOKOTEDI: Prince Mokotedi has an Honours degree in Government and Economics. He previously worked for a transportation research and consultancy firm as an urban planning analyst. He is presently employed by the HSRC as a research intern, and his interest is in foreign and public policy analysis.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

MANKOKO SUSAN MOLETE: Ms Molete holds a B.Comm. and Diploma in Banking and has extensive experience in Finance, for instance as Head Office Accountant; Manager Retail Accounting; Manager Budgets and Management Accountant at the African Bank (1983-1990); and as Assistant Management Accountant at Woolworths (Pty) Ltd (1990-1992). She is at present Financial Director of ASC Consultancy and involved in community work, particularly Women's Rights in her capacity as a member of the PAC's Women's Wing.

LEBONA MOSIA: Lebona Mosia is a lecturer in the Department of Politics at Rhodes University, Grahamstown.

BERNARD NCUBE: Sister Bernard Ncube is President of the Federation of Transvaal Women. She studied at St. Thomas' School (Heidelberg) and St. Mary's Teacher Training College (Lesotho). She taught in various Catholic schools in Johannesburg and served as a field worker for the South African Catholic Bishops' Conference (1980-1987). Sister Ncube also worked for the Institute of Contextual Theology (1987).

KIERIN O'MALLEY: Kierin O'Malley obtained a law degree [LL.B.] from the University of Stellenbosch in 1985 followed by an Hons. degree in politics from the University of Cape Town in 1986. After a short stint as an articled clerk in Cape Town, he joined Unisa's Department of Political Sciences. He teaches courses in Third World politics and has special research interests in ethnicity, nationalism and the problems of 'nation-building' and democracy in multi-ethnic states.

MARGOT PIENAAR: Margot Pienaar holds an LL.B. from the University of Stellenbosch and is currently busy with an LL.M. thesis on the impact of the human right to development in land reform. She has been involved in the promotion of human rights education through various organisations and is currently a candidate attorney at the Legal Resources Centre, which litigates in test cases in order to obtain legal rulings which promote human rights and social justice.

NIC RHOODIE: Professor Nic Rhoodie is a political sociologist specialising in inter-ethnic conflict and sociopolitical change in plural societies. A former Professor of Sociology at the University of Pretoria, Dr. Rhoodie is currently a Chief Research Specialist in the Human Sciences Research Council's Division for Sociopolitical Monitoring and Analysis.

ALBIE SACHS: Albie Sachs obtained a BA LL.B. from the University of Cape Town and practised as an advocate in the Supreme Court of South Africa, Cape Town. He subsequently took a Ph.D. at Sussex University and became Senior Lecturer in Law at the University of Southampton. Since then he has taught in Mozambique and served as Director of Research in the Mozambican Ministry of Justice. He also taught at Columbia University. Attached to the University of the Western Cape, he is a member of the ANC's Constitutional Committee.

LAWRENCE SCHLEMMER: Lawrence Schlemmer is a former Director of the Centre for Policy Studies at the University of the Witwatersrand and also a former Vice President and President of the South African Institute of Race Relations. He is at present a Vice President of the Human Sciences Research Council. Professor Schlemmer is an internationally acclaimed analyst in the field of race and ethnic relations. He is the author of over 250 books, as well as chapters in books, journal articles and research reports.

MS J.A. SCHREINER: Jenny Schreiner is employed as Research Officer in the President's Office of the ANC and a member of the ANC and MK. She has been elected to the Central Committee of the SACP and works in the SACP Political Education and Gender Departments. She holds an M.A. in Sociology from the University of Cape Town.

SIPHO SHABALALA: Sipho Shabalala is employed in the Department of Business Administration, University of Natal (Pietermaritzburg). Holding an M.A. in Management, he has taught in Zimbabwe, Zambia and the Transkei. He specialises in teaching, research and consulting on strategic management and marketing.

FREDERIK VAN ZYL SLABBERT: Dr. Frederik Van Zyl Slabbert has been described as South Africa's most influential politician without a party. Leader of the former Progressive Federal Party (PFP) now the Democratic Party (DP), he walked out of Parliament in 1986 to establish the Institute for a Democratic Alternative for South Africa (IDASA). He is an Associate Professor at the Wits Business School and Chairman of the Central Witwatersrand Metropolitan Chamber.

ZOLA SKWEYIYA: Zola Skweyiya was educated at Lovedale, Fort Hare University and then received an LL.D. at the University of Leipzig, Germany in 1978. In exile from 1963 to 1990, he worked in various capacities for the ANC. He is currently Director of the ANC's Legal and Constitutional Affairs Department, a member of both the ANC's NEC and NWC, Chairperson of the ANC's Constitution Committee, Co-ordinator of the ANC's Civil Service Unit and a member of the ANC's Negotiations Commission.

SERVAAS VAN DER BERG: Servaas van der Berg is Professor of Economics at the University of Stellenbosch, where he has been lecturing since 1982. His research work is mainly concerned with how macro-economic and other constraints affect issues of development, employment, poverty, distribution, social policy and the fiscal consequences of political transition in South Africa.

HENDRIK W. VAN DER MERWE: H.W. van der Merwe, Emeritus Honorary Professor of the University of Cape Town, was Director of the Centre for Intergroup Studies for 25 years. He became Senior Consultant to the Centre in 1992 and was appointed a Peace Fellow at the United States Institute of Peace in Washington, DC for the years 1993-1994.

ANTHONI VAN NIEUWKERK: Anthoni van Nieuwkerk is a Senior Researcher of the South African Institute of International Affairs. His research interests are in South Africa's international relations, and the politics of the Southern African region. He is currently engaged in a Ph.D., focusing on South Africa's foreign policy.

JOHANN VAN ROOYEN: Dr Johann van Rooyen is an independent political analyst temporarily residing in Canada. He taught politics at Rhodes University in 1989 before returning to full-time research in the sphere of ethnonationalism. He received a Ph.D. from the University of Cape Town in 1992 and is author of the forthcoming book *The white right-wing in South African politics.*

WILLEM VAN VUUREN: Willem van Vuuren is Professor in the Department of Political Studies, University of the Western Cape. His current research and teaching interests include democracy and problems of good governance, the dynamics of transition politics in South Africa and theories of ideology and symbolic politics.

ALBERT VENTER: Albert Venter is Associate Professor and Head of the Department of Political Studies at the Rand Afrikaans University. A specialist in federal government, he also concentrates on governmental and constitutional options for South Africa.

HERBERT W. VILAKAZI: Herbert W. Vilakazi is Professor and Head, Department of Sociology, University of Zululand. He studied anthropology and sociology, at Columbia University and the New School For Social Research, both in New York City, USA. In 1980, he was appointed Professor and Head of the Department of Sociology, University of Transkei. Professor Vilakazi has written many articles, in books and journals, as well as writing on major political issues in the press.

MARINUS WIECHERS: Marinus Wiechers (Rector designate of the University of South Africa) has held the post of Professor of Constitutional and International Law at the University of South Africa since 1966. He holds the degrees of B.A. (Law), LL.B. and LL.D. from the University of Pretoria. His main fields of interest are constitutional and administrative law: he has been involved in numerous constitutional issues and negotiations during the past 25 years, and was one of the draftsmen of the Namibian Constitution. Professor Wiechers is further regarded as the doyen of the science of administrative law in South Africa. He has also been active in the sphere of public international law.

ROCKY WILLIAMS: Dr Rocky Williams, Director, Military Research Group (MRG), is a former member of the SADF and MK's Intelligence Division. He completed a Ph.D. in civil-military relations at the University of Essex in 1992.

GAVIN WOODS: Gavin Woods holds a doctorate of economics from the University of Teufen, St. Gallen, Switzerland. After serving as a project consultant, Dr Woods became Executive Director of the Inkatha Institute in Durban. He has to date written 56 conference papers, 39 published research papers and diverse articles for academic journals.

PAULUS ZULU: Paulus Zulu is Associate Professor, Centre for Social and Development Studies, at the University of Natal (Durban). Holding a Ph.D. in Political Sociology from the University of Natal (Durban), Dr Zulu is working mainly on black politics, political violence, township conflict and domestic resistance movements.

CONTENTS

Preface 1

I Nation-building as a democratic means of reconciling national unity with ethnic and cultural diversity

Chapter 1

Nation-building and community reconciliation in an embattled South African society 9

Ian Liebenberg

Chapter 2

Beware of nation-building discourse 23

Johan Degenaar

Comment on Liebenberg 30

Neville Alexander

Reply to Degenaar and Alexander 32

Ian Liebenberg

II The role of ethnic nationalism in nation-building

Chapter 3

Nationalism, nation-building and non-racialism 37

Heribert Adam

Chapter 4

The awkward issue: some comments on the South African debate on nation-building and ethnicity 52

Irina Filatova

Chapter 5

Comment on Heribert Adam specifically in the African context 60

Willie Breytenbach

Chapter 6

Comment on Heribert Adam's viewpoint 64

Albert Venter

Chapter 7

Reply to comments by Breytenbach, Filatova and Venter 72

Heribert Adam

Chapter 8

A neglected dimension of nation-building in South Africa: the ethnic factor 77

Kierin O'Malley

III The constitutional and institutional bases of democratic government in South Africa

Chapter 9

The constitutional and institutional bases of democratic government 91

Lourens du Plessis

Chapter 10

Response to Lourens du Plessis' contribution 104

Willem van Vuuren

Chapter 11
From apartheid to *liberal* democracy 113
Robert Mattes

Chapter 12
Steps toward the strategy of nation-building: response to Lourens du Plessis 126
Margot Pienaar

Chapter 13
Majority rule and minority rights 133
Albie Sachs

IV The sociopolitical conditions for democratic nation-building and intercommunity reconciliation

Chapter 14
The sociopolitical conditions for community reconciliation in South Africa 147
Herbert Vilakazi
Comment by Paulus Zulu 155

Chapter 15
The sociopolitical conditions for democratic nation-building: an Afrikaner point of view 158
Carel Boshoff (IV) and Carel Boshoff

Chapter 16
The sociopolitical prerequisites for nation-building: comment on Vilakazi's chapter 167
Joe Latakgomo

Chapter 17

Settling for second best: preconditions for reconciliation and nation-building 173

Steven Friedman

Chapter 18

Symbolic unity: the role of cultural symbols in nation-building 182

Charles Malan

Chapter 19

Response to comment by Zulu, Boshoff, Latakgomo, Friedman and Malan 190

Herbert Vilakazi

Chapter 20

Nation-building through pluralism? An Inkatha perspective 193

Gavin Woods

Chapter 21

Forces inhibiting the making of a South African nation 205

Johann van Rooyen

V Key socioeconomic determinants of democratic nation-building in South Africa

Chapter 22

Socioeconomic policy and democratisation in South Africa 215

Pieter Haasbroek

Response to Haasbroek 225

Sipho Shabalala

Chapter 23

The socioeconomic conditions for the democratisation of South Africa 228

Tito Mboweni

Chapter 24

Enabling economics: a policy perspective 234

Henk Langenhoven

Chapter 25

Economic reconciliation as a precondition for sustained democracy 240

Servaas van der Berg

VI The transition from apartheid to democracy

Chapter 26

Salient elements in the transition from apartheid to democratic government 251

Oscar Dhlomo

Chapter 27

White South Africans' expectations regarding democratic nation-building and community reconciliation 257

Nic Rhoodie

Chapter 28

Perspectives on negotiation and mass action in the transition to democratic nation-building 274

H.W. van der Merwe and Gabi Meyer

Chapter 29

National liberation and the quest for democratic nation-building 280

Zola Skweyiya

VII Gender equality as a precondition for democratic nation-building

Chapter 30

Reconstruction: the path to non-sexist nation-building 293

Jenny Schreiner

Chapter 31

Women, civil society and citizenship: a reaction to Schreiner 315

Amanda Gouws

Chapter 32

The path to non-sexist nation-building: gender issues 325

Sr Bernard Ncube

Chapter 33

Response to comments by Gouws and Ncube 331

Jenny Schreiner

Chapter 34

Women and their role in political, social and economic change in South Africa 335

Mankoko Molete

VIII Violence — a pervasive inhibitor of nation-building

Chapter 35

Political violence in South Africa: are we putting out the fire from the top or the bottom? 345

Chris de Kock

Chapter 36

The myth of black-on-black violence 365

Fatima Meer

Chapter 37

Violence and nation-building in South Africa 376

Jacklyn Cock

Chapter 38

Response to the comments by Meer and Cock 380

Chris de Kock

IX The role of the security institutions

Chapter 39

The South African Defence Force of the future 385

Jakkie Cilliers

Chapter 40

The creation of a legitimate defence force in a post-settlement South Africa 397

Rocky Williams

X International involvement in nation-building

Chapter 41
International involvement in nation- and state-building in South Africa 413
Deon Geldenhuys

Chapter 42
Determinants of foreign involvement in South Africa 421
Erich Leistner

Chapter 43
International involvement in state reconstruction and nation-building in South Africa 426
Anthoni van Nieuwkerk and Lebona Mosia

Chapter 44
Building a democratic South Africa: the role of international organisations 440
Prince Mokotedi

XI Concluding overview: the prospects for democratic nation-building in South Africa

Chapter 45
The challenge of institution-building in the transition to democracy 449
Van Zyl Slabbert

Chapter 46
National reconciliation through legitimate state institutions 455
Marinus Wiechers

Chapter 47
Modes of nation-building for South Africa 461
Lawrence Schlemmer

PREFACE

> *'We salute those who made this development possible; we also urge those who remain outside the negotiating process to join the task of nation-building and reconciliation as South Africa prepares for its first non-racial elections'.*
>
> US Department of State spokesperson Christene Shelly commenting on South Africa's approval on 18 November 1993 of its first-ever non-racist democratic constitution.

The large number of internal conflicts currently occurring in ethnically, culturally, ideologically and historically divided countries worldwide, is bringing home to decision makers the realization that the key to sociopolitical stability lies in democratic nation-building and a culture of tolerance and reconciliation. Governments that are still nursing the wounds inflicted by many decades of internal conflict, are coming to the conclusion that democratic nation-building is the most effective means of conflict management. Judging by the multiparty negotiations on the establishment of a democratic social order in South Africa that have taken place to date, this country is no exception.

Of the 185 member nations of the United Nations there are hardly 20 that can be categorized as clearly homogeneous in terms of their culture, history, language, religion and ethnic characteristics. The vast majority of the others are segmented on the basis of one or more of these indicators. These societies have by definition an inherent potential for conflict as is exemplified by the more than two hundred smaller or bigger wars that have broken out since the end of World War II. Some have been going on interminably, for example the community conflict involving the Irish nationalists in Ulster, the nationalists in the Basque region of Spain, the Kmer Rouge (Cambodia), the Tamils (Sri Lanka), the Sikhs (Punjab), the Kurds (Iraq), the Nagas (India), the Armenians (Turkey) and the Palestinians (Israel); the growing conflict in several of the former Soviet Union's republics (for example the ethnic power struggle in Azerbaijan and Georgia), and the civil wars in Zaire, Chad, Burundi, Ghana, Liberia, Somalia, Angola and the Sudan. It is in the context of the settlement and management of these conflicts, and the elimination of their underlying causes, that the parties concerned are increasingly being confronted with the reality that only democratic nation-building will be capable of scaling down violent conflict to proportions that can be politically managed and accommodated provided that this occurs in tandem with a sustained and credible process of community reconciliation and within a stable political order and expanding economy.

A comparative analysis of the abovementioned conflicts underlines the fact that the success or failure of democratic nation-building revolves primarily around a particular country's ability or inability to reconcile national unity and mainstream civic institutions with the culturo-historical and ethnic diversity of the broad spectrum of society. Not all deeply segmented polities succeed in accomplishing such a reconciliation. Many regard coercive nation-building as a threat to established interests even to the sovereignty of the state. Indeed, there are analysts who argue that nation-building is no guarantee of democracy and order and that the citizenry should rather strive to establish legitimate democratic institutions and introduce fundamental human rights. In Zimbabwe, for example, the fact that the country's citizens define themselves statutorily as Zimbabweans, is no guarantee that democratic civic institutions and fundamental human rights will become entrenched within Zimbabwe's national borders.

During the heyday of apartheid in South Africa, all so-called 'non-whites' were excluded from the National Party's definition of nation-building. The monopoly of power that the ruling interest group exercised, therefore, left little room for community reconciliation, a situation that changed radically in 1990 and 1991 when President De Klerk made the dismantling of statutory apartheid an irreversible process. Suddenly participation in nation-building came within the reach of black South Africans and community reconciliation was no longer merely a pipe dream. Confronted with the socio-economic and political realities of South Africa, white people finally realized that their disadvantaged neighbours were becoming part of the new South African nation and would no longer stand by passively and watch the 'whites' appropriate an exclusive nationhood for themselves. With his speech on 2 February 1990, President De Klerk heralded the era of democratic nation-building and laid the long-term foundations for a culture of tolerance and loyal South Africanism that would have to extend community reconciliation beyond the level of merely good intentions.

It is against this background that the HSRC's Division: Sociopolitical Monitoring and Analysis decided to contribute to the process of democratic nation-building and the creation of a culture of tolerance through the publication of a book aimed at familiarizing South Africans with the intricacies of community reconciliation and nation-building. A further aim was to link the launch of the publication to a full-day conference during which the core aspects of nation-building in South Africa's unique circumstances could be intensively discussed.

- Aspects of nation-building that merit particular attention in the South African context are community reconciliation and a culture of tolerance as a prerequisite for democratic nation-building;
- the historical and sociopolitical forces that on the one hand promote and on the other, inhibit community reconciliation;
- the transition from apartheid to a democratic social dispensation;

- the constitutional and institutional requirements for democratic nation-building;
- the supremacy of the law and the institutionalization of basic human rights;
- the sociopolitical and socioeconomic requirements for community reconciliation;
- the role of violent conflict in the process of change, and
- international involvement in nation-building in South Africa.

The editors invited each of the 50 eminent experts/analysts to make a concise contribution to the envisaged publication. The contributing authors represent a broad spectrum of ideological perspectives and politically relevant interest groups. The standpoints of the contributors do not necessarily represent the official alignment or policy of their respective organizations.

Provision was made for critical interaction between the contributors in accordance with the conference model. In cases where there was critical comment on a particular contributor's input, the contributor was given the opportunity of replying to it. However the intention behind the interaction was not to deliver formal critiques on each other's standpoints, but to make a unique contribution to our knowledge of the intricacies of nation-building.

If we analyse the dynamics of nation-building, historical precedents show that nation-building can be reconciled with *democratic* government. Nation-building also need not necessarily degenerate into forced integration; nor does nation-building mean that ethnocultural, linguistic and religious pluralism can be maintained only if nation-building is sacrificed. Nation-building creates conflict in the state's sociopolitical institutions if the politically dominant sector tries forcibly to replace the existing order with institutions aimed basically at entrenching and monopolising its own power. In the latter case we have *un*democratic nation-building ranging from subtle discrimination to genocide. There are unfortunately many examples today of undemocratic nation-building through the barrel of a gun. Ethnic 'cleansing' can indeed be a mode of nation-building, but only at the expense of democratic institutions/values. Some examples of (largely) autocratic methods of nation-building are the interethnic power struggle in Burundi, the Sudan, Somalia, Ethiopia, Liberia, Georgia, Armenia, Iraq, Sri Lanka and Bosnia. In all these cases, nation-building is the smoke screen behind which the dominant power group tries to reinforce its own privileged position. Conversely, examples of nation-building in culturally and ethnically deeply segmented societies where this process is to a greater or lesser degree occurring according to democratic principles, are Belgium, Israel, Czekia, Slovakia, Namibia, Zimbabwe, Nigeria, Uganda, Canada and Switzerland.

The democratic culture of reconciliation, which is such a crucial condition for nation-building, *is mainly a function of values.* Good intentions alone are not sufficient to give nation-building a democratic foundation. Democratic nation-building is therefore essentially a product of the *meeting of minds* needed to support democratic institutions. Democratic nation-building and the value system in which it is rooted, cannot be created by means of a proclamation in the *Government Gazette.* A culture of reconciliation, democratic decision-making and historically based loyalty as well as social order, political stability and economic prosperity are required to meet the critical conditions for democratic nation-building.

Democratic nation-building will succeed in South Africa only to the extent that South Africans (i) face up to the abovementioned conditions in a spirit of creative realism; (ii) implant a democratic culture and spirit of reconciliation in their diverse communities, and (iii) put a brake on the spiral of unrealistic expectations that has escalated dramatically among the black South African communities in particular in recent times. The gap between these expectations and their gratification has grown so wide over the years that it will be impossible to narrow it meaningfully within the foreseeable future.

National unity, no matter how elusive it may be, appears to be the most rewarding investment in the prevention of revolutionary conflict, as well as the most effective way of stemming any backsliding into apartheid or other authoritarian systems. At the end of April 1994 a new South Africa will be created from its historical and human ingredients. If this creation does not inspire the new South Africans with a common loyalty toward the new state, the latter could easily go the way of the former Yugoslavia. We trust that this book will help to alert South Africans to the challenges contained in South Africa's quest for democracy, national unity and order.

In conclusion the editors wish to express their appreciation to the contributing authors for their willingness to take part in this project. Many carried out their task while fulfilling many other pressing duties. Everyone felt throughout that nation-building has become a highly topical subject: one that will become progressively more topical and relevant in the run-up to the general election on 26-28 April 1994.

The invaluable assistance of the following people is also acknowledged with thanks: Dr Daan van Vuuren, who was initially closely involved in the planning of the book; Diana Ehlers, for the graphic work; Maria Noordman and Arlen Welman, for the technical editing of the draft manuscript; Sarie Moolman, who undertook much of the editing of the manuscript and, together with Tim Steward, did the lion's share of the translation; Martie Boesenberg, for proofreading of the highest quality; Berta Wheeler for helping to carry the typing load; the HSRC Publishers, for their professional preparation of the manuscript in particular Claudia Davidson for overseeing the final editing of, and putting the finishing touches to the manuscript; and finally, Dr Chris de Kock, Head of the Division: Sociopolitical Monitoring and Analysis, for his unfailing advice, interest and encouragement.

NIC RHOODIE
IAN LIEBENBERG

SECTION

I

NATION-BUILDING AS A DEMOCRATIC MEANS OF RECONCILING NATIONAL UNITY WITH ETHNIC AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY

CHAPTER

1

Nation-building and community reconciliation in an embattled South African society
Ian Liebenberg

2

Beware of nation-building discourse
Johan Degenaar

Comment on Liebenberg
Neville Alexander

Reply to Degenaar and Alexander
Ian Liebenberg

CHAPTER 1

Nation-building and community reconciliation in an embattled South African society

Ian Liebenberg

There is no idea, however ancient and absurd, that is not capable of improving our knowledge. The whole history of thought is absorbed into science and is used for improving every single theory. Nor is political interference rejected. It may be needed to overcome the chauvinism of science that resists alternatives to the status quo.

Paul Feyerabend, 1975

Nationalism the principle of homogeneous cultural units as foundations of political life, and of the obligatory cultural unity of rules and ruled is indeed inscribed neither in the nature of things, nor in the hearts of men, nor in the pre-conditions of social life in general, and the contention that it **is** *so inscribed is a falsehood which nationalist doctrine has succeeded in presenting as self-evident.*

Ernst Gellner, 1983

An ethical choice, perhaps grounded in the hatred of any arbitrary exercise of institutional power, looms on the horizon. A new moment of decision thus confronts us. The triumph of those who could freeze time or turn back the clock will also pass. The future is not over; indeed it has barely begun.

Stephen Bronner, 1992

AN ECLECTIC INTRODUCTION

I was on my way to meet some white conservatives for a discussion on the progress at the negotiation table. Or rather the lack of progress in the negotiation process (the previous day the Conservative Party and some other members constituting the Concerned South African Group (COSAG) had threatened to pull out of the already-frail process). A newspaper billboard proclaimed: '75 rallies to mark June the 16th' — rallies at which some young black people, against the decree of their political elite/leadership, would chant: 'Kill a Farmer, Kill a Boer!' The city was less busy than usual — the result of a fairly successful stayaway to mark 16 June 1976, which has since then become an 'unofficial' 'official' day of remembrance for the Soweto revolt which ended in the death of (conservatively estimated) 500 black children. Around were signs of new tensions soon to follow. Rightwingers would stormingly disrupt negotiations at the World Trade Centre — and Peter Mokaba, ANC youth leader, would reportedly suggest armed action against the military show of force in the East Rand townships by the SADF representatives of the pretransitional regime. These events and others that have followed have made me reflect again on the future facing South Africa.

Can an embryo nation or a proto-nation such as the divergent South African society be reconciled and restructured into a nation?[1] And what is more: should one work towards this? Will it not cause more pain, more violent conflict? Can we, painful as it is now, extract ourselves by luck or divine insight from our past of conflict and excesses to build a tomorrow, a new future? Is fantasia, which La Palombara talks about (actively envisaging and working for some denoted political structure), a needed ingredient in our politics? Will fantasia-directed strategies towards building a democratic community — or a nation of citizens — not lead to Jacobinist strategies or Stalinist impositions or Hitlerian authoritarianism? These are difficult and harrowing questions that confront South African theorists, politicians and lay-people as we struggle painfully through death and destruction in our communities towards a future sometimes seemingly unattainable and a past not willing to let us go in peace.

Indeed these are no easy questions. The quote from Gellner (above) is qualified by the sobering note: 'But nationalism as a phenomenon, not as a doctrine by nationalists, is inherent in a certain set of social conditions; and those conditions, it so happens, are the conditions of our time' (Gellner 1983:125). Can we escape that notion in our political discourse in the short term? I doubt it.

While accepting the phenomenon, none other than Gellner himself points out that nationalism is one '-ism' among many (Gellner 1983:126). It is also an '-ism' with many manifestations — many of them with a tortuous history. He mentions that it is primarily a phenomenal quality of modern/industrial society. In a more extreme sense — nationalism is a product of high industry. In fact in modern times the transition to an age of nationalism has been painful (Gellner 1983:39 ff). Degenaar echoes this, but cautions:

> There is controversy in the conventional wisdom around nation-building. Nation, derived from Latin — *Natio* — as a concept has a variety of

> meanings. Amongst them *nation*, a group of people linked by birth, *nation* as a concept closely linked with legal uses of the term, *nation* as used in a congruence of uni-culturalism (or homogeneous culture) or oneness of people, and of culture and state and lastly *nation* in a multi-cultural context (Degenaar 1990:2).

What about nation-building, then? Gagiano's definition will apply here:

> (Nation-building) is ... the integration of communally diverse and/or territorially discreet units into the institutional framework of a single state and the concomitant transfer of a sense of common political identity and loyalty to the symbolic community defined by the founding ideology of such a state (Gagiano 1990:32).

I will take my cue from the last two approaches to nation-building. In our hybrid society (a mix of subcultures, interest groups and 'first' cum 'third' world paths of development), one thing stands out:

Nation can be linked (both in theoretical analysis and in praxis) to culture.

> Each of these provisional but nominal definitions, the cultural and the voluntaristic, has some merit. Each of them singles out an element which is of real importance in the understanding of nationalism. But neither is adequate. Definitions of culture, presupposed by the first definition, in the anthropological rather than the normative sense, are notoriously difficult and unsatisfactory. It is probably best to approach this problem by using this term without attempting too much in the way of formal definition, looking at what culture does (Gellner 1983:7).

For the moment we shall leave culture undefined. Are cultures becoming one higher/mass culture?, as Neville Alexander argues or are cultures non-definable entities? Are culture(s) in an evolutionary-revolutionary paradigm of change and transition; are cultures forever in flux?

Let us assume the last proposition for the purpose of this argument.

Gellner shows how nationalism became a *paradigm* — a transmuted '-ism' in the restructuration of a transient society from hunter-gatherer, agrarian society and finally to (semi-) industrial society (Gellner 1983:7 ff).

The 'nationalism'/'culture' link is clearly made by Gellner. For example:

> Time was when education was a cottage industry, when men could be made by a village or clan. That time has now gone, and gone forever. (In education, small can now be beautiful only if it is covertly parasitic on the big.) Exo-socialisation, the production and reproduction of men outside the local intimate unit, is now the norm, and must be so. The imperative of exo-

> socialisation is the main clue to why state and culture must now be linked, whereas in the past their connection was thin, fortuitous, varied, loose, and often minimal. Now it is unavoidable. That is what nationalism is about, and why we live in an age of nationalism' (Gellner 1983:38).

Given the advance of society worldwide — but also here towards industrialisation — the following is concluded by Gellner: What is happening is 'the transition to an age of nationalism.' Yet, nationalism or definitions of it are elusive in nature:

> The most important steps in the argument have now been made. Mankind is irreversibly committed to (*caught in* — my insertion) industrial society, and therefore to a society whose productive system is based on cumulative science and technology. This alone can sustain anything like the present and anticipated number of inhabitants of the planet, and give them a prospect of the kind of standard of living which man now takes for granted, or aspires to take for granted. Agrarian society is no longer an option, for its restoration would simply condemn the great majority of mankind to death by starvation, not to mention dire and unacceptable poverty for the minority of survivors. Hence there is no point in discussing, for any practical purpose, the charms and the horrors of the cultural and political accompaniments of the agrarian age: they are simply not available. We do not properly understand the range of options available to industrial society, and perhaps we never shall; but we understand some of its essential concomitants. The kind of cultural homogeneity demanded by nationalism is one of them, and we had better make our peace with it. It is not the case, as Elie Kedourie claims, that nationalism imposes homogeneity: it is rather that a homogeneity imposed by objective, inescapable imperative eventually appears on the surface in the form of nationalism (Gellner 1983:39).

Gellner continues: 'To sum up this argument: a society has emerged based on a high-powered technology and the expectancy of sustained growth, which requires both a mobile division of labour, and sustained, frequent and precise communication between strangers ...' (Gellner 1983:33-34).

Whether we like it or not, we in South Africa are partly industrialised, 'developing' or 'newly industrialising'. We cannot escape the 'developmental path'. And in that way we are caught in the potential force of a modern '-ism' — in this case nationalism as a presumably overarching hegemony in our context. This is a reality which we have to reckon within our discourse and in our analysis of South African society in transition.

Yet nation cannot easily be defined. More so, nation-building, akin to the development of culture, is a concept in flux. Transposed on a society, it becomes an open-ended structuration process. Van Peursen refers to modern culture as '*kultuur-*

in-stroomversnelling (liberally translated as culture in the rapids/white waters). So it is with the notion of nation-building. It is an open-ended process. Giddens (1979) argues that structuration is an open-ended process transfixed between agent, power and change. This also applies to the notion of nation-building.

Linked to this is the notion that in a time of global transition (or mere global change, if one is somewhat more sceptical — one should be careful not to confuse mere change with democratisation). Constance Cole (1990) warns us that such a notion can be problematic, while we are confronted with transition 'theory'/ transitology.

Yet, one has to couple the emerging theories of transition to social phenomena in general, as well as nation-building or the restructuring of national relationships (see for example Van Vuuren 1990:1; Schmitter 1993:18-21). 'By implication it (transition "theory") challenges conventional political wisdom and reduces the possibility and applicability of existing deterministic methods of analysis. It calls for a new type of theoretical analysis' (Van Vuuren 1990:1).

However, we are not dealing only with nations, national linkages and culture that are dynamic in nature. Neither are we dealing only with a society in transition — which, as we have seen, can be interpreted within a non-static framework. We are confronted with a post-modern context where the interplay between agents, structures, -isms and culture(s) is *eclectically* transforming our everyday life. Collectivities and individuals are interactively transforming our environment on an ongoing basis. Thomas Hanna refers to this aspect of modern society as the 'forever present evolution-revolution' (Hanna 1970:13, 308). Also, while the popular myth and journalistic buzzwording has it that socialism/communism/internationalism/ Marxism is dead, Bronner reminds us:

> Progress is not yet a worthless concept. Economic justice, democracy, and internationalism were originally understood as interconnected moments of the socialist project. Teleology no longer guarantees their actualization; no party any longer serves as their revolutionary vehicle; they have been ripped from their context by intellectuals who claim that a coherent context is impossible to affirm. But their relevance will remain; ignoring one might even ultimately involve endangering all three. An ethical choice, perhaps grounded only in the hatred of any arbitrary exercise of institutional power, looms on the horizon. A new moment of decision thus confronts us. The triumph of those who could freeze time or turn back the clock will also pass. The future is not over; indeed, it has barely begun (Bronner 1992:144 in a chapter 'Reflections on the end of history').

An astute perception — and indeed very descriptive of our current situation. Needless to say, these issues impact on our (South) African context. In the following part, a brief look will be taken at the debate on nation-building in the African context.

THE AFRICAN CONTEXT AND THE DEBATE ON NATION-BUILDING

Ronaldo Munck shows us in *The difficult dialogue* that the debate between nationalism and Marxism (or variations of socialism and internationalism) in the 'third' world is not dead. On the contrary, he concludes with the vision that in academic discussion as well as in political praxis the dialogue will go on for decades to come.

For Munck nationalism is alive and well (Munck 1986:1). He maintains that in the third world (so-called) and Africa there is a continuing debate on nation and nation-building, as well as an attempt to link these concepts to more radical theories (Munck 1986:108 ff).

While some remind us that nation-building is outmoded, others try with or without success to 'build nations'. Christopher Clapham, well-known theorist on African studies informs us that 'centralized nation-building failed to a great extent in Africa and new avenues need be explored'.[2] 'Nation', 'nation-building' and related concepts however are part and parcel of our conceptual framework and discourse on politics at this juncture in time. We in Africa also have a historical legacy of nation-building in our discourse, theory and praxis. In our search for sustainable democracy and economic growth we will have to reckon with this legacy — in both political debate and in our attempt to restructure our political framework.

This impacts on the process of and the debate on nation-building in third world countries and also in ours.

The close link between democracy, nationalism and socialism in our African context is stressed by Lawrence (1991), Glaser (1991) and Palmberg (1982), while Carol B. Thompson (1991) points towards a stage *'Beyond the nation-state?'* She opts for regional democracy in Southern Africa and criticises the intellectual emptiness of *some* strands of Marxism. She concludes:

> This brief study suggests, therefore, that the terrain of the struggle for democracy in southern Africa, and perhaps in all of Africa, is as much regional as national. Further, Marxist theories are ignoring praxis that is already in place — real, concrete, detailed, grassroots regional action that is affecting class alliances. SADCC is promoting regional development, which can influence the popular classes as they demand more democratic participation in controlling their own lives. The contradictions are real and nothing is guaranteed. But because the international political economy is authoritarian and antidemocratic, neither democracy nor development is possible in one

> country. To understand the visions and the obstacles, regional analysis of development and democracy must be higher on the agenda than at present (Thompson 1991:226).

As an integral/important footnote one has to mention that this does not necessarily apply to all Marxist or radical theory and that radical theory reminds us that not all problems are glibly solved by liberal or capitalist axioms. This calls for *politics beyond ideological prisons*. Onimode (1992) points out that (Southern) Africa is burdened by structural challenges and ideological legacies that undermine the geo-socioeconomic potential of the region. Implicitly he states the need for an inclusive politics beyond mere 'muddling through' and 'beyond just mere adjustment' (for survival).

What this means for us is that the notion of nation-building is present, yet needs to be counterbalanced by regional development, economic growth strategies and democratisation — also socialisation (economic democratisation). This is no easy task. Also, note Degenaar's (1990) warning that nation-building can dwarf the rights of individuals and citizens and thus undermine democracy. Willem van Vuuren argues compellingly that if our transition process is focused too much on power-sharing deals between the main actors (and this may include notions of nation-building), the following danger exists:

> We have already alluded to the fact that although the negotiating parties may be divided over fundamental issues, they remain contenders for political power; they share a vision of a system which would enable them to have, if not all, at least some governing power. And this common interest in power may well override their interest in safeguarding effective citizen rights against future power holders, thus preventing a genuine democratic transition (Van Vuuren 1993:12).

A RAILROAD FROM FAIRYLAND TO WORKING DEMOCRACY: BUT WHAT ABOUT NATION-BUILDING?

In 1987 at the Dakar meeting between South Africans from 'inside' South Africa and those from 'outside' South Africa (the ANC), arranged by the Institute for a Democratic Alternative for South Africa (IDASA), Giliomee introduced his two nations thesis. This thesis suggested that two nationalisms were at loggerheads in South Africa. There would be no easy way out. A settlement between the NP and the ANC needed to take into account the reality of these two nationalisms. (Giliomee later talked about bicommunalism. Yet the point was made.) After years of unilaterally imposed social engineering to create 'independent/*aparte* nationalisms', Dakar at least introduced — albeit implicitly — the notion of an expanded nationalism debate in South Africa.

Aggrey Klaaste, the charismatic editor of *The Sowetan*, also introduced his notion of nation-building. Nation-building needs to grow from inner awareness, self-discovery and can start from home building, family building and even gardening. The debate was soon picked up in progressive journals and newspapers like *Democracy in Action, Die Suid-Afrikaan* and *Vrye Weekblad*. Some of the better-known contributors to the debate included Van Zyl Slabbert, Alex Boraine, Aggrey Klaaste, Lawrence Schlemmer, Hermann Giliomee, Johan Degenaar and Pallo Jordan. Today the concept nation-building is used glibly sometimes without content, sometimes with contempt, sometimes with hesitance, sometimes with enthusiasm.

What does this all say for South Africans in our embattled context? I shall briefly outline some ideas here.

There is some truth in Degenaar's (1990) proposition that nation-building can dwarf the rights of individuals and citizens (or the cultural rights of some groups). Furthermore Van Vuuren's warning that the current negotiation process can bring about a dictatorship or a dual power lock that can undermine the rights of the citizen — especially the warning of a case of strong national entities 'locked up' in a power deal should be heeded (Van Vuuren 1993:11-12). The result of such a shotgun marriage of the 'strongmen' could be potentially highly undemocratic.

Nation-building is closely linked to the type of transition that we can expect in South Africa. The type of nation-building will relate closely to the way in which power is shared or transferred. Du Toit points out that there could be three types of nation-building: 'ethnic nation-building by the state' (nation-building imposed from above), Jacobin nation-building (a nation-building project driven under the auspices of the state such as those espoused by the 'people's power model', as Du Toit (1991:24-26) calls it), or African (racial?) nationalism imposed by the PAC or AZAPO-like organisations. Lastly, liberal nation-building could take place — combining pluralist and some authoritarian characteristics. Van Zyl Slabbert points out that there are three ideal-typical ideological divisions in deeply divided societies and these can tie in with different approaches to 'building the nation':

> Hanf finds three ideal-typical ideological divisions in deeply divided societies: *ethnic exclusivism* ("this is white man's country", or "boer-republicanism" or "Zulu militancy"); *Jacobin egalitarianism* (we are all "workers", "Africans", "non-racialists"); or *syncretistic nationalism* ("unity in diversity")'. The first two are intolerant in an exclusive sense, for example 'we are all the same and nobody can be different'. By contrast, the last is *tolerantly inclusive*, 'we are

different but have things in common which are more important than our differences' (Slabbert, 1992:75).

For Rantete and Giliomee three types of transition — or three paths towards transition — await us. Potentially they can link up closely with the abovementioned types of nation-building.

These three potential types of transition in South Africa are:

- Transition decreed from above
  * outcome undemocratic
- Transition through extrication/decolonisation
  * outcome potentially undemocratic
- Transition through transaction
  * outcome potentially undemocratic

(Rantete & Giliomee 1992:515 ff.)

For Rantete and Giliomee, transition through transaction has the most potential to end in some form of democracy. In their opinion the first two options will not and cannot lead to democracy. The danger exists however that transition through transaction — as with other strategies for transition — may implicitly include *Jacobin nation-building* (nation-building imposed from above) and this could undermine the achievement of sustainable democracy (see Van Vuuren's warning and Habermas, Endnote 3).

One question remains: If we can attain negotiated-assisted transition through a symbolic moment such as universal elections and the writing of a constitution, what is the place of a programme of nation-building in such a future state structure? The fact that nation-building rhetoric does exist and is part and parcel of political discourse in South Africa, makes an attempted answer to this question very important.

The transaction model ANC/NP causes doubts — it can be undemocratic. The Jacobin egalitarian model is also cause for concern — it can also be undemocratic. Ethnic exclusivism causes violence — we have a history of it. (As does Bosnia and Lebanon.)

If transition is guided by tolerant inclusiveness, there could be some place for nation-building provided that the driving imperatives are towards a democratic community underpinned by a free, vibrant civil society.[3] Together with democracy building, constitution making should be of utmost importance.[4]

As long as 'nation-building' in an inclusive tolerant sense is guided by the imperative of reconciliation, (sub)cultural tolerance and the practical 'working for' sustainable democracy, it may be of help. If nation-building is not guided by these imperatives and not willing to engage openly in communicative interaction/dialogue enabling greater civil freedom (accepting civil society as co-partner in the negotiation process), forms of internationalisation (that is, economic democracy) and a redistribution of wealth while maintaining growth, nationalism and nation-building become a stumbling block.[5]

Slabbert is probably very apt in his observation:

> South Africa is the largest graveyard of political predictions in the world. She has been condemned, cursed and dismissed more often than understood. The complexity of her problems has undermined the confidence of many competent analysts. Very few, if any, would have predicted that she could now be busy with negotiating away domination and seeking to put democracy in its place. The dynamics of this transition have unleashed a flood of creative energy in all areas of societal life. Most key actors on national, regional and local levels display a willingness to engage rather than confront, to create rather than destroy. South Africa is not on the point of collapse or disintegration; nor is she on the point of imminent breakthrough to a trouble-free democracy. One of the hopeful signs is a growing awareness of the gravity of the problems that have to be solved. In short, South Africa's quest for democracy is not as easy as some pretend, nor as futile as others predict. As long as the impact of the past on the present is not ignored when the future is negotiated, it is a quest worth pursuing with as much vigour as the extraordinary people of South Africa can muster (Slabbert 1992:100).

If that vigour and energy Slabbert is talking about is mustered towards building a society firstly structured upon working and sustainable democracy — with nation-building taking a secondary role, one can hope and work for success and attainment of the elusive goal of democracy and an understanding of nation where '(t)he nation of citizens does not derive its identity from some common ethnic and cultural properties, but rather from the *praxis* of citizens who actively exercise their civil rights' (Habermas 1992:3).

The challenge of the future for South Africans is simply this: can popular micronationalisms (especially where they are linked to ethnic populisms mobilised by political elites) which currently cause tension and result in violent politics, be transformed into a collective democratic entity of citizens (a 'nation' of citizens, as described by Habermas) who freely co-exist as a reconciled, developing and growing community whatever their cultural backgrounds? Such a tolerant democratic 'nationhood' seems to be a possible guiding imperative.

NOTES

1. *Per se* the debate on nation-building takes place in Africa and South Africa in a global environment of change. Remember, however, Constance Cole's warning that mere change does not necessarily equal democratisation. Yet, one can argue that there are at least some imperatives towards a globalisation of the debate on democratisation (Cole 1990:3).

   Furthermore the debate in the global context is taking place in a world in flux. Thomas Hanna refers to it as the presence of the 'evolution-revolution' of our time (Hanna 1970:307-308). Also the notion of transition to democracy as identified by O'Donnel, Schmitter, Diamond and other transition theorists in many parts of the world, creates a situation where nation-building (if deemed necessary or considered influential for historical reasons) needs to be seen through more critical eyes (Degenaar 1990). Also, owing to the insights gained from the development of transition-theory, one is reminded that 'normal science' analysis is not only restrictive, it is even unhelpful. Rather, an approach that 'challenges conventional political wisdom and reduces the possibility and applicability of existing methods of analysis is needed. It calls for a new type of theoretical analysis' (Van Vuuren 1990:1).

2. Christopher Clapham at a conference arranged by the African Institute on behalf of the African Studies Association of Southern Africa, June, Magaliesberg Conference Centre 1993. While excellent work has been done on the 'roots of nationalism' — for example Liah Greenfeld's *Nationalism: five roads to modernity* and Emerson's *From empire to nation: the rise to self-assertion of Asian and African people,* I am in this chapter less concerned with the roots (and even fruits) of nationalism. What is argued is rather that there is a plurality of notions surrounding nationalism — and thus nation-building — such as *ethnic proto-nationalisms* ('Boerevolk', 'Zulu-nation', etc.), and *Jacobin nation-building* (imposing from above), such as some elements within the NP, ANC and PAC. The debate on nation-building is open, yet should be counterbalanced, informed and criticised by other notions such as regional development, economic co-operation, democratic community building and reviving and sustaining civil society. This, and not the roots of nationalism(s), should be the focus of the debate. The terrible legacy of nation-building in the African context should, however, be taken into account. See for example *The black man's burden: Africa and the curse of the nation state* (Basil Davidson 1992) for an exposé of the excesses and mistakes of nation-building in Africa.

3. In my view the following Habermasian notion has a lot to say about our situation: 'The meaning of the term "nation" thus changed from designating a prepolitical entity to something that was supposed to play a constitutive role in defining the political identity of the citizen within a democratic polity. The nation of citizens does not derive its identity from some common ethnic and cultural properties, but rather from the *praxis* of citizens who actively exercise their civil rights. At this juncture, the republican strand of "citizenship" completely parts company with the idea of belonging to a propolitical community integrated on the basis of descent, a shared tradition and a common language' (Habermas 1992:3).

   Once we understand that 'nation' is closely linked with the broader democratic notion of citizenship as the guiding light for a (geographical) community, we have made important advances in our theory, and praxis, of becoming a democracy/democratic entity.

4. Maybe there is something to say for Duvenage's suggestion that we should engage in a debate on the establishment and sustainment of constitutional patriotism rather than nationalism and nation-building (Duvenage & Liebenberg 1993:11).

5. Building a democratic community and nursing a culture of democracy — with or without the assistance of nation-building rhetoric is no easy task. Slabbert points to the transitional difficulties involved in this process in his book *The quest for democracy: South Africa in transition.*

   In a chapter entitled 'A few important imponderables' he argues that while there is no inevitable outcome to the process of transition, the chances of attaining democracy in South Africa will be advanced if the following areas receive due attention:

   (1) The *unresolved security* system should preferably be turned/transformed into a non-partisan and impartial security system.

   (2) These need for *transitional legitimacy*. 'Transitional legitimacy means demonstrable support for the strategies and mechanisms of transition by the major parties' (Slabbert 1992:73). A tall order, indeed.

   (3) The *ideological conflict* between ethnic exclusivists, Jacobin egalitarianists and syncretistic nationalism needs to be resolved peacefully.

   (4) *Economic performance* needs to be raised/recharged.

   (5) Attention should be given to the upliftment, schooling and incorporation of *black youths* into a working and workable social and economic system (Slabbert 1992:75-77).

   None of these are easy questions to resolve, and hard work and hard bargaining await South Africans in this regard. But nowhere in the world has it been said that social reconstruction would be an easy task!

REFERENCES

ADAM, H. & MOODLEY, K. 1993. *The negotiated revolution.* Houghton: Jonathan Ball Publishers.

BRONNER, Stephen, E. 1992. *Moments of decision: political history and the crises of radicalism.* New York: Routledge.

CHEGE, Michael *et al.* (eds). 1988. *Democratic theory and practice in Africa.* London: Henneman and James Curry Publishers.

COHEN, R. & GOULBOURNE, H. (eds). 1991. *Democracy and socialism in Africa.* San Francisco: Westview Press.

COLE, Constance, 1990. *Challenging the use of democratization to describe change.* A working document (unpublished) delivered at the American Political Science Association (APSA) in August/September, San Francisco.

DAVIDSON, B. 1992. *The black man's burden: Africa and the curse of the nation-state.* London: James Currey Publishers.

DECALO, S. 1991. Back to square one: the re-democratization of Africa. *Africa Insight*, 21(3):153-161.

DEGENAAR, J.J. 1990. *Nations and nationalism: the myth of the South African nation*, Occasional paper No. 40, IDASA, Mowbray.

DIAMOND, L. 1989. Beyond authoritarianism and totalitarianism: strategies for democratization. *The Washington Quarterly*, Winter:141-161.

DU TOIT, P. 1991. *Power plays: bargaining tactics for transforming South Africa*. Halfway House: Southern Book Publishers.

DUVENAGE, P. & LIEBENBERG, I. 1993. *Can the deep political divisions of the South African society be healed? A moral perspective on politics*. A paper delivered at the PWPA biannual congress, Sandton, April.

EMERSON, R. 1960. *From empire to nation: the rise to self-assertion of Asian and African peoples*. Boston: Beacon Press.

ESTERHUYSE, W. & DU TOIT, P. 1990. (eds). *The myth makers: the elusive bargain for South Africa's future*. Halfway House: Southern Book Publishers.

FEYERABEND, P. 1975. *Against method: outline of an anarchistic theory of knowledge*. London: Verso Publications.

GAGIANO, G. 1990. The contenders. In: ESTERHUYSE, W. & DU TOIT, P. (eds). *The myths makers: the elusive bargain for South Africa's future*. Halfway House: Southern Book Publishers.

GELLNER, E. 1983. *Nations and nationalism*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

GIDDENS, A. 1979. *Central problems in social theory: action, structure and contradiction in social analysis*. London: Macmillan.

GLASER, D. 1991. Discourses of democracy in the South African Left: a critical commentary. In: COHEN, R. & GOULBOURNE, H. (eds). *Democracy and socialism in Africa*. Boulder: Westview Press.

GREENFELD, L. 1992. *Nationalism: five roads to modernity*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

HABERMAS, J. 1992. Citizenship and national identity: some reflections on the future of Europe. *Praxis International*, 12(2):1-19.

HANNA, T. 1970. *Bodies in revolt: a primer in somatic thinking*. New York: Delta Books.

LAWRENCE, Peter. 1991. Economic democracy, socialism and the market. In: COHEN, R. & GOULBOURNE, H. (eds). 1991. *Democracy and socialism in Africa*. San Francisco: Westview Press.

LIEBENBERG, I. 1993. *Can the Phoenix fly? The transition from authoritarian rule to democracy in South Africa*. Monograph soon to be published. Pretoria: HSRC.

MUNCK, Ronaldo. 1986. *The difficult dialogue: Marxism and nationalism*. London: Zed Books.

NGUGI WA THIONG'O. 1993. *Moving the centre: the struggle for cultural freedoms*. London/ Nairobi: James Currey and EAEP.

ODHIAMBO, A. & OYUGI, W.O. *et al.* (eds). 1988. *Democratic theory and practice in Africa*. London: James Currey and Heinemann Publishers.

ONIMODE, B. 1992. *A future for Africa: beyond the politics of adjustment*. London: Earthscan Publications.

PALMBERG, M. 1982. *The struggle for Africa*. London: Zed Books.

RANTETE, J. & GILIOMEE, H. 1992. Transition to democracy through transaction? Bilateral negotiations between the ANC and the NP in South Africa. *African Affairs*, 91:515-542.

SHUBANE, Khehla. 1992. Civil society in apartheid and post apartheid South Africa. *Theoria*, No. 79, May:33-42.

SLABBERT, VAN ZYL. 1992. *The quest for democracy: South Africa in transition*. Johannesburg and London: Penguin Books (Forum series).

SCHMITTER, Philippe C. 1993. Exploring the limits of transitology. *Prospects: SA in the Nineties*, 2(1):18-21.

THOMPSON, C.B. 1991. Beyond the nation-state? Democracy in the regional economic context. In: COHEN, R. & GOULBOURNE, H. (eds). *Democracy and socialism in Africa*. Boulder: Westview Press.

VAN VUUREN, W. 1990. *Transition theory: guidelines for new politics in South Africa*. Paper delivered at a colloquium of the Political Science Association of South Africa, Broederstroom, October.

VAN VUUREN, W. 1993. Transition agents or power rivals? *Prospects*, 2(1), March/April:11-12.

CHAPTER 2

Beware of nation-building discourse

Johan Degenaar

Comment on Liebenberg

Neville Alexander

Reply to Degenaar and Alexander

Ian Liebenberg

The nation exists before all, it is the origin of everything. Its will is always legal, it is the law itself.

Sieyes

To attempt to forge a new unitary South African nation through cultural and political engineering is sheer madness.

Tamarkin

It is very difficult, if indeed not impossible, to write on the theme of nation-building and communal reconciliation without a thoroughgoing analysis of the main concepts involved. For those interested in this type of analysis I refer to my essay 'The myth of a South African nation' (Degenaar 1991), which consists mainly of a deconstruction of the concept of nation. A shortened and adapted version, entitled *No sizwe / The myth of the nation* has been published in *Indicator SA* (Degenaar 1993).

Although it is impossible in this short response to embark on a conceptual analysis of terms, a serious discussion requires some clarification of the main concepts which should all be seen as controversial.

My suggestion is that we view communal cultures (or ethnicities) and nations not in a primordial fashion but as social constructs. Ethnicity is a social construct which consists of a group of people with a common descent, culture and language. The term 'nation' refers to a group of people mobilised, organised and legitimised on the basis of the principle of congruence of culture and power. Culture is the form of life of a community and should not be seen as a self-enclosed whole. When the congruence of culture and power concerns a homogeneous communal culture, organic terms such as birth and growth of a nation are used to describe the nation expressing sovereignty in a nation state. In the case of the state using its power to impose a common culture on a plurality of communal cultures in a multicultural society the metaphor of building a nation is used and a state-nation is said to be formed. (All writers do not adhere to this distinction between nation-state and state-nation, however. The term 'nation-state' usually covers both cases. The context provides the clue to the meaning which is utilised.)

I have argued against both constructions of the nation, whether one is viewed as being born into a nation, or as being involved in building a nation from a plurality of cultures. In both cases individuality and plurality are negated. I have demonstrated this in my essays on nationalism (Degenaar 1982, 1991). This authoritarian characteristic linked to the concept of nation was present at its inception during the French Revolution and is formulated by Sieyes as follows: 'The nation exists before all, it is the origin of everything. Its will is always legal, it is the law itself' (quoted by O'Brien 1990:48). It comes as no surprise, therefore, that Hitler extolled nationalism as follows: 'Politics have to cease in the national family' (quoted by Adam 1990:9). The use of nationalist terminology is dangerous since it feeds on the myth of a collective personality and creates wrong expectations in the minds of citizens while not preparing them to accept the difficult challenge to create a democratic culture which accommodates individuality and plurality. It makes use of a language which recalls the nineteenth and twentieth centuries instead of introducing terms which prepare us for the twenty-first century. It is a modernist discourse in a post-modernist age, enforcing a uniformity where a diversity should be acknowledged and respected.

In terms of the distinction between nation-state and state-nation which, unfortunately, is not always acknowledged, the nation part of nation-building fits neatly into state-nation discourse. Instead of a nation which acquires statehood (organically) we are introduced to a concept of nation which is constructed (mechanically) by the state. Tamarkin (1992:18-19) acknowledges the distinction and criticises the Jacobin nature of the state-nation:

> The concept of state-nation, as distinguishable from nation-state, acquired academic credence, legitimacy and currency. The notion of state-nation assumes that Leviathan (the state) can, and is morally entitled to, forge a national identity out of diverse ethnic groups. This notion is as deterministic as it is dangerously Jacobin. It is deterministic because it assumes that the end

> result of the endeavour of the state-nation is bound to be a nation-state. It is dangerously Jacobin because it assumes that there is a national "general will" which entitles the wielders of power to coerce and to destroy identities which groups of people voluntary assume.

In place of the myth of building a nation I propose for South Africa the ideal of creating a democratic culture. This allows for the term *nation* to be used in a legal sense incorporating South Africa into the international legal order as a nation liberated from the negative and absolutist characteristics ascribed to it by nationalisms of various kinds.

With regard to Liebenberg's chapter I can state that, although he demonstrates a sensitivity for democratic values, he still operates within a discourse which favours nation-building. To speak of the South African society as an 'embryo-nation or a proto-nation' is to impose nationalist ideology onto our society — a society which is in dire need of a liberating idiom. In my publication on the myth of a South African nation I have discussed many approaches to the concept of nation and various views of what nation-building in South Africa entails, for example, the notions of common culture, modernisation culture, socialist culture, and democratic culture (Degenaar 1991). I have also discussed the merits and demerits of these views. Liebenberg concentrates mainly on Gellner's view which opts for the common culture of industrialisation, which is (wrongly) assumed to overcome communal cultures. Liebenberg fortunately views culture not as a self-enclosed whole but as a resource. This enables him to view nation (and nation-building) as an open-ended process and accordingly encourages us to become involved in this process. I argue that we need not embark on this road because of the negative characteristics of the discourse of nationalism and especially since we are faced by far more important problems.

There are signs that Liebenberg is conscious of the importance of issues which mainly concern the construction of a just society. Consider, for example, the statement made in the second footnote: 'The debate about nation-building is open, yet should be counterbalanced, informed and criticised by other notions such as regional development, economic co-operation, democratic community building and reviving and sustaining civil society. This, and not the roots of nationalism/s, should be the focus of the debate.' And when he gives some content to nation-building it is closely linked to my call for the creation of a democratic culture. 'If guided by tolerant inclusiveness there could be some place for nation-building provided that the driving imperatives are towards a democratic community underpinned by a free, vibrant civil society. Together with democracy building, constitution-making should be of utmost importance.'

He also quotes Habermas (1992:3) who speaks out in favour of a civic nation: 'The nation of citizens does not derive its identity from some common ethnic and cultural properties, but rather from the *praxis* of citizens who actively exercise their civil rights.' This is a clear statement in favour of a democratic society, but my view is that there is no imperative to introduce the concept of nation in this connection. Consider the reluctance of some scholars to refer to the American and Swiss states as nations. Liebenberg correctly emphasises the need for democratic values and appropriately uses the rhetoric of constitutionalism. Why does he then still find it necessary to mix it with the rhetoric of nationalism? Constitutionalism can accommodate communal cultures and encourage communal reconciliation. Nationalism, on the contrary, cannot accommodate communal cultures for a nation entails uniformity since it refers to a group of people mobilised, organised and legitimised on the basis of the principle of congruence of (one) culture and power.

In this last section I intend to summarise my position by formulating various proposals as follows:

- Let us drop the romantic exercise of nation-building and get on with the difficult task of democracy creation. Furthermore, let us make a clear distinction between these two political ideals. In a post-modernist age the rhetoric of nationalism is an outdated conceptual apparatus.
- Let us be bold enough to say no to the tradition of the French Revolution epitomised by the statement: 'The nation exists before all, it is the origin of everything. Its will is always legal, it is the law itself.' We need to counter this rhetoric of nationalism with the rhetoric of constitutionalism.
- Let us disallow the state to use the concept of the nation to legitimise its use of power. This is a moot point: nationalism encourages the state to do just that. The state sacrifices plurality 'to the imperative necessity of making the Nation the mould and measure of the State' (Lord Acton, as quoted by Davidson 1992:49). One of the main problems of politics is to establish the appropriate relationship between state and society. Nationalism enables the state to use the nation to determine this relationship. This entails that uniformity is imposed on society in the name of the unity of the nation. In this way the state cannot do justice to the plurality of society which should be protected at all costs. Even worse, nationalist rhetoric enables the state to justify its Jacobin strategy on the basis of a presumed supremacy of the nation.
- Let us free ourselves from the confines of modernist discourse in a post-modernist age. This entails that the highest political loyalty cannot be due to the nation, since there is a plurality of loyalties that should be acknowledged and protected. Loyalty to the state is only one of many and, as is the case with all loyalties, should be under constant critical scrutiny.

- It is meaningful to introduce 'national symbols' if they function as useful tools to create a mild form of patriotism towards one's country, and if citizens are educated to realise that there is a clear distinction between patriotism and nationalism. Patriotism can be defined as 'an ideology that promotes loyalty to a society that is territorially and politically defined regardless of the cultural background of its members' (quoted by Adam 1990:13).
- We should be critical of the naive liberal belief that the process of modernisation on its own will cope with the conflict of communal cultures. The modernisation thesis assumes that the process of modernisation inevitably overcomes ethnic divisions by overcoming loyalties to folk cultures because of the assumed convergence of life-styles (Gellner 1983). This thesis has been proved wrong, however, since there are sufficient examples of this not being the case. According to Phadnis (1989:18):

  > The processes of modernisation and development are caught up in the dialectics of their own dynamics, combating ethnic loyalty on the one hand and stimulating ethnic consciousness on the other. Consequently, whatever the level of development of the state, ethnic conflicts need to be viewed as parts of an ongoing process which have to be coped with and managed, but cannot be resolved once and for all except through the total assimilation or elimination of a particular group.

  He adds that assimilation is not successful and genocide is morally unacceptable. What remains is the ideal of a democratic culture which tolerates different cultures and views conflicts as part of an ongoing process. For this reason my advice to South Africans is that we should not romanticise too easily about reconciliation between conflicting communal cultures, but accept the challenge of continuing tension as part and parcel of a pluralist world and of the tension-generating and enriching diversity of a post-modern culture.
- We should make a clear distinction between political society and civil society and realise that ethnicity operates within civil society which includes communities and organisations that do not vie for political power. The state should provide freedom for communal cultures which should not compete for the power of the state and become involved in playing the nationalist game, endeavouring to aim at nationhood, that is, the congruence of (communal) culture and power. If we use the discourse of nation-building we will not succeed in well-meaning attempts to achieve communal reconciliation for, inadvertently, we release the national aspirations of communal cultures encouraging them to become what they should not be, namely, flashpoints of discontent. Simpson (1993:19) points out that, if this happens, 'the problem of the illegitimacy of the South African state would simply be perpetuated in a new form'. We should rather encourage two ways of belonging: a belonging to the state — a shared sense of citizenship — and a

belonging to one's communal culture a shared sense of 'psychic shelter'. Walzer (1980:28) aptly formulates membership of communal cultures as follows: 'The primary function of the state, and of politics generally, is to do justice to individuals, and in a pluralist society ethnicity is simply one of the background conditions of this effort. Ethnic identification gives meaning to the lives of many men and women, but it has nothing to do with their standing as citizens.'

- We must realise that the concept of nation is not a neutral concept but that it is contaminated by history and that the nation-building discourse is antagonistic towards ethnicity, pluralism, regionalism, federalism — notions that play an important role in contemporary political theory and practice. And we should also keep in mind that there are many examples of nation-states experiencing the limitations of their own nationalisms. In many instances the crucial question is raised, namely, who is the bearer of the right to self-determination? Many subnational groups, for example, apply this principle to themselves. Simpson (1993:17) emphasises this tendency to centrifugalism rather than centripetalism as follows:

> The model Western nation-state is as vulnerable to dissident subnationalism as any in the Third World or, more recently, Eastern Europe. The autonomist movements in the West, always rubbing in the background, have now moved to the forefront, raising serious doubts in regards to the unquestioned assumption that the nation-building project in the West was completed, even after centuries of independent statehood. The renewed vigour of autonomist movements in Quebec, Corsica, the Basque country, Catalonia, Scotland, Wales, renewed tensions in the always uneasy truce between Flems and Wallons in Belgium, all indicate that much had been kept under wraps in the West, and that the illusion of nation-statehood also held sway there.

Add to this the experience of African states in respect of failures in nation-building as imposed by Western empires, and one should not be surprised that Basil Davidson chooses as title for his book on nationalism *The black man's burden. Africa and the curse of the nation-state.* Consider also the statement by General Obasanjo of Nigeria: 'We have squandered almost 30 years with ineffective nation-building efforts. It is high time to cast solid foundations for the legitimacy of our political systems' (*International Herald Tribune*, 23 April 1990).

Ives Person echoes the same anti-nationalist sentiment: 'Hope will be limited until Africa calls Europe to account by demanding that it chooses another type of development and until Africa rids itself of that poisonous heritage of colonialism: nation-state' (quoted by Tamarkin 1992:1). Tamarkin (1992: 2, 23) also follows this line of thinking as is clear from his statement: 'The strategy of nation-building, a major thrust in post-colonial Africa, is not only a hopeless effort but also a damaging one.' Applying this to South Africa, he warns: 'To attempt to forge a new unitary South African nation through cultural and political engineering is sheer madness.'

In the light of these examples one can seriously raise the question: Is it wise of South Africans at this crucial stage of their history, involved in freeing themselves from the 'internal colonisation' imposed by the empire of Afrikaner nationalist rule — to build their political future on the dangerous and discredited discourse of nationalism?

- If, in spite of the philosophical criticism of nationalism, the historical evidence of its dangers, the political limitations of its practice, the moral inadequacies of its ideology, there still remains the need to take part in the discourse of nation-building, one can consider introducing — in a very cautious manner — the concept of a civic nation. This concept entails a rejection of national myths in favour of liberal values of citizenship. It links with the view of Habermas (1992:3): 'The nation of citizens does not derive its identity from some common ethnic and cultural properties, but rather from the *praxis* of citizens who actively exercise their civil rights.' However, to the extent that this liberal discourse ignores the importance of communal cultures in favour of the nation that has to be built, it disqualifies itself as meaningful contribution to (pragmatic) politics. Then one should rather rest satisfied with the normal use of the term 'nation' in a legal sense which is internationally acceptable, and concentrate on the creation of a democratic culture which, in being realised through the *praxis* of citizens who actively exercise their civil rights, could develop a shared feeling of commonality. It is to be hoped that this commonality does not destroy the tension between a diversity of communal cultures, but contributes to a life-style which enables South Africans to live creatively with the inevitable tension of such a diversity. To wish for more than this demonstrates a misunderstanding of what it means to live in a post-modern age.

REFERENCES

ADAM, H. 1990. *Exclusive nationalism versus inclusive patriotism: State ideologies for divided societies.* Paper presented at the International Conference of the One Europe Research Group, Jaqiellonian University, Cracow/Koninki, Poland, October 1990.

DAVIDSON, B. 1992. *The black man's burden. Africa and the curse of the nation-state.* London: James Curry.

DEGENAAR, J. 1982. *The roots of nationalism.* Cape Town: Academica.

DEGENAAR, J. 1990. Nation-building an example of outdated thinking? *Democracy in Action*: June/July 8-10.

DEGENAAR, J. 1991. The myth of a South African nation, IDASA. (*Occasional Paper*, No. 40.)

DEGENAAR, J. 1993. No sizwe/The myth of the nation. *Indicator SA*, 10(3):11-16.

GELLNER, E. 1983. *Nations and nationalism*. London: Basil Blackwell.

HABERMAS, J. 1992. Citizenship and national identity: Some reflections on the future of Europe. *Praxis International*, 12(2):1-19.

NOLUTSHUNGU, S. C. 1993. Reflections on national unity in South Africa: A comparative approach. *Third World Quarterly*, 13(4):607-625.

O'BRIEN, C. C. 1990. The decline and fall of the French Revolution. *The New York Review of Books*, February 15:46-51.

PHADNIS, U. 1989. *Ethnicity and nation-building in South Africa*. New Delhi: Sage.

SIMPSON, M. 1993. Nation-building a post-apartheid super glue? *Indicator SA*, 10(3):17-20.

TAMARKIN, M. 1992. *Nationalism, nation-building and society in Africa fateful connections*. Centre for African Studies, University of Cape Town.

WALZER, M. 1980. Pluralism in political perspective. In: THERNSTROM, S. (ed.), *The politics of ethnicity*. Cambridge, Mass. Harvard University Press.

Comment on Liebenberg by Neville Alexander

As an attempt at questioning the relevance of nation-building in South Africa, this contribution is premature. It treats a complex question in a formalistic academic manner as though it were simply a question of voluntaristically picking and choosing between available alternative paradigms. There is scant trace of the history of the concept 'nation' in general or of its history in the South African context. The entire discussion is disembodied as though one were simply staring at shapes projected by a magic lantern; in so far as it is intended as a caveat against the very real dangers of ethnic or national chauvinism, it is stupendously trite, misconceived and misdirected. In so far as it is motivated by a fear of the possibility of a chauvinist black Africanist 'nationalism', it is an obvious attempt at pre-empting that possibility at an ideological/theoretical level but, again, it is misdirected and, in fact, like Johan Degenaar's recent researches on the subject, it is haunted (in my view) by the spectre of a repeat performance of the Broederbond's monstrous social engineering experiment that went so disastrously wrong. The difference, of course, is that this time the Afrikaners would be the apprehensive subjects of an assimilationist experiment too ghastly to contemplate. Once bitten, twice shy.

But do we really have to fear the worst? Is all this gratuitous and rather wayward theorising called for at this stage? Any discussion on nation-building in South Africa has to begin by examining the objective developmental trends in the political economy and in the society more generally. In particular, we have to note how through the capitalist mode of production groups of people were integrated into this political economy for different labour-related reasons at different times and in different phases in the development of capitalism in South Africa. In my own work on the subject, I have tried to trace the history and the flux of the different identities, discourses and 'subject positions' that were generated in the course of this complex and conflictual evolution of South African society. Besides the exploratory theoretical-historical work in *One Azania, one nation* (1979), I refer in particular to some essays in *Sow the wind* (1986), 'Approaches to the nation question in South Africa' (1988) and the essay on *Language policy and national unity in South Africa/ Azania* (1989). I refer especially to my interrogation definition of the 'nation' (and, I may add, of 'culture' and 'language'). I have specially highlighted the significant contribution of Benedict Anderson to this debate (see his *Imagined communities*), which has helped to free us from the Cartesian trap. More recently, the dialogical essays of Wallerstein and Balibar (*Ambiguous identities*) have confirmed the fertile potential of this approach.

On the theoretical level, therefore, my indictment is that the essay focuses myopically on one school of thought, viz. the positivistic, Risorgimento heritage. On the political-historical level, I believe the essay equates all nation-building with ethnic chauvinism. This is impermissible, given the centuries-long and diverse history of nationalism. The really serious errors, as I see it, are the authors' failure to come to terms with the articulation between class, colour, language and identity in South Africa: their failure to recognise the inescapable process by which human beings assume specific social identities because of the nature of ideology, that is, the relationship between consciousness and the existential project of the individual in the world: their consequent failure to realise that if South Africans do not succeed in building a nation, they will fall apart into warring factions legitimised in ethnic, racial party-political and perhaps even in religious terms.

In conclusion; to pose 'democracy-building' and 'nation-building' as two at worst mutually exclusive, at best super- and subordinate political projects in modern South Africa is to pose a false dichotomy and, in fact, to fall into a category mistake. It is a mistake that will blind our intelligentsia to the not-so-hidden agendas of our ethnic and other particularist politicians who, under the guise of 'building democracy' will merrily entrench minority privileges. In South Africa as it is at present constituted, the nation-building project (forget about the false analogies with other African countries) is a progressive project, one which is compatible with the promotion of the interests of the urban and the rural poor even if it does intersect with those of some interests among the wealthy and the powerful. Because it can be, and is, carried by the majority of the people as a flag, not of convenience, but of unification, it remains the best clothing for the democratic project. As long as it is not an exclusivist ideology that grows in a soil of xenophobic antagonism (as happened in Europe in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries), a united South African nation could become a driving force for regional, and even continental African integration. Far from being passé, the future of the South African nation has just begun.

AN UNFINISHED REPLY TO RESPONSES TO AN UNFINISHED DEBATE

Liebenberg's reply to Degenaar and Alexander's comment

On our right we have Johan Degenaar — without doubt one of the most distinguished philosophers this country has produced ... And on our left we have Neville Alexander, a struggle school expert, a praxis-oriented and trained academic, and without doubt one of the most persuasive and most eloquent spokespersons for the forging of a new nation in a working class democracy in South Africa/Azania.

Fortunately I am not the referee, nor the judge nor directly in the firing line — at least not yet.

The responses of Johan Degenaar and Neville Alexander to my paper reflect the different poles and wide-ranging nature of the debate on democracy, democratisation and nation-building (and they also imply the need for communal/collective reconciliation) in this beloved but deeply divided country of ours.

My reply is obviously not the final word on the historical debate on notions such as nation-building, democracy, democratisation, etc. There can never be a final word. In fact in our context this is just the beginning ...

My main point of difference with Johan Degenaar is that at this moment the debate on nation-building and democracy is inconceivable without accepting the reality of, and the support for, both concepts namely 'nationalism' and 'democracy' (or language games, if you like!). In the short term we have at least to accept both concepts as well as the interaction between them.

Yet, and I agree with Degenaar here, the focus should be on the building of a pervasive democratic culture. And I think it is clear that when I use the terms 'nation' and 'nation-building' I mean restructuring the 'nation' in the sense of achieving a Habermasian free collectivity of interacting citizens. Such 'a free collectively of interacting citizens' means people not binded by loyalty to race, colour or religion, but binded by a common loyalty to a free (civil) society and its legitimate institutions.

My difference with Neville Alexander occurs when he reads into my contribution a sense of 'fearing the worst' or 'myopically' focusing on the possibility of ethnic nationalisms — or specifically an exclusivist black nationalism. No way! Nation-building and the accompanying democracy debate (because definitions of democracy do differ and will differ in any 'good democracy') need to be inclusive, energetic and to fully accommodate the (black) working class and their aspirations — even the working class leadership at some stages of the democratic project (process if you want!).

And indeed these are no easy solutions for transition to inclusive democracy — and Neville correctly goes to pains to point this out.

Yet, nation-building and democratisation are a multifaceted process and can be likened to 'letting a hundred flowers bloom'. Nevertheless the democratisation process and the nation-building process are the subject of ongoing debates. This does not mean an imposed consensus, nor merely reconciling two or more different views on democracy. It means that contenders are and should be accepting the differences and playing the power game according to agreed-upon imperatives/ rules.

And we need not fear the worst! Active agents and interactive agents have power and can collectively restructure societies in a non/less violent way to achieve a democratic culture and societal praxis. To achieve this there has to be an understanding of the rules of the democratic game. As pointed out by Van Vuuren, following Schmitter and O'Donnell:

> This implies that a prior unity and consensus between parties is neither a necessary nor a sufficient condition for democracy. Democracy should rather be sought through the mutual acceptance of dissensus and political pluralism. Which means that the existence and equal political rights of opponents should be mutually respected — while they *remain* opponents (Van Vuuren 1990: unpublished paper).

This implies sufficient persistence and tolerance on the part of agents and actors, incumbents and challengers, protagonists and antagonists to achieve a clear commitment to the democratic competitive procedure and thus adhere to the rules of democracy. It also implies conveying this message to their followers.

It implies at least a *minimal democracy* (poliarchy), at best *socialisation* (economic democracy) and the upholding thereof within the limits of democratic rules, checks and balances and the ability to accept defeat and/or victory graciously now and in the future. In short: it means hard work to live democracy, and harder work to sustain it ...

I thank Neville and Johan for the radical pointers in this debate on social transformation in South Africa. I also thank them for their eloquent and well-argued presentations and urge them and other contributors to keep this transformative discussion open and growing. This is *not* the end of history as Michael Levine said in a different context. Also we can say this and more; this is but the beginning ...

SECTION

II

THE ROLE OF ETHNIC NATIONALISM IN NATION-BUILDING

CHAPTER

3 Nationalism, nation-building and non-racialism
Heribert Adam

4 The awkward issue: some comments on the South African debate on nation-building and ethnicity
Irina Filatova

5 Comment on Heribert Adam specifically in the African context
Willie Breytenbach

6 Comment on Adam's viewpoint
Albert Venter

7 Reply to comments by Breytenbach, Filatova and Venter
Heribert Adam

8 A neglected dimension of nation-building in South Africa: the ethnic factor
Kierin O'Malley

CHAPTER 3

Nationalism, nation-building and non-racialism

Heribert Adam

PERSPECTIVES ON THE REVIVAL OF NATIONALISM

The disintegration of official Marxism-Leninism leaves an ideological vacuum that is increasingly being filled with nationalism. At the same time, as national borders fade in Western Europe, separatist movements gain unprecedented support worldwide. The paradox that societies with the most universalist doctrine of Marxism have spawned the most fierce revival of ethnic chauvinism needs to be explained. Increasing economic borderlessness, increased migration in a global division of labour and markets, the need for economies of scale, free of customs post and trade restrictions, the internationalisation of production and consumption, are accompanied by new demands for political sovereignty. Secessionist movements not only dismantled the last colonial empire, the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia, but also threaten many multination-states in the Third World and modern industrialised entities such as Canada. Far from being an atavistic sentiment in geographic backwaters of the world, nationalism remains a historical force, more likely to be reinforced by global capital flows and constraints on sovereignty than to be swept aside by internationalisation. While much of the literature on modernisation presumed the imminent dissolution of ethnicity, its vigorous revival cannot be denied.

Despite the revulsion against apartheid as a form of state-imposed nationalism, even the new South Africa experiences the aftershocks of the European tremors. With a renewed coloured consciousness in mind, Jakes Gerwel warns: 'There is a powerful worldwide tendency to re-legitimate ethnicity and racial divisions which will not leave the project of nation-building here untouched' (*South*, 6 March 1993, p. 4). Whether the much propagated non-racialism can immunise South Africa against a revival of nationalism remains to be seen. Many local and foreign observers consider the concept an idealistic dream, certain to crumble in the face of increased competition and struggles for political power. Donald Horowitz (1991:28), for example, bluntly labels the non-racial society 'the plural society's analogue to the utopian aspiration for a classless society'.

South Africa constitutes a divided society of a special type, however. State-sponsored, in some cases state-manufactured, ethnic groups were legally allocated differential rights and privileges. This imposed group membership distinguishes South Africa from such divided societies as Northern Ireland, Israel, and Nigeria. Moreover, despite the high visibility of racial group boundaries, there are common languages and religions; there is a considerable geographical interspersal and above all, there is thorough economic interdependence. These factors combine to produce intergroup relations in South Africa which are different from those in countries with distinct nationalities, each in its own territory.

Two prevalent but misleading reactions to the paradox of simultaneous denationalisation in Western Europe and renationalisation in Eastern Europe can be discerned: first, there is a revival of primordial explanations of nationalism and, second, there is a tendency to denounce nationalism as a parochial reaction to modernisation.

For primordialists such as Donald Horowitz (1985) or Henry Isaacs (1975), the sense of peoplehood remains a historical given from time immemorial. For sociobiologists such as Pierre van den Berghe (1983), the psychological bond that joins people to selfconscious bands, tribes, or nations forms an evolutionary advantage in the development of the human species. Less biologically certain analysts of ethnonationalism consider the nature of the attachment 'shadowy and elusive' (Connor 1978:379) or, in Geertz's (1973:259) formulation, not reducible to practical necessity or common interest, 'but at least in great part by virtue of some unaccountable absolute import attributed to the very tie itself'. Such romanticisation of ethnicity, with its focus on the non-rational, intangible aspects of spiritual affinity, clearly needs to be demythologised, clarified and rethought by an analytical interpretation.

The mainstream analysts of ethnonationalism (Connor 1987; Horowitz 1985), have stressed the emotional appeal of kinship symbolism as the secret of mobilisation. Nathan Glazer (1981:79) has argued that ethnic conflict 'seems to have become more effective in reaching and drawing upon the more emotional layers of the human and social personality than class conflict'. Against the rational class conflict, based on interests, Glazer detects in ethnicity an additional 'irrational appeal, that seems to connect better with powerful emotions'. Pierre van den Berghe (1983) reduces ethnicity to nepotism, an evolutionary conditioning to support kin over non-kin. If indeed the 'emotional depth of ethno-national identity' (Connor

1987:204) lies in kinship imagery and communalism has a genetic base, then non-racialism and common nationhood have little chance of being realised in South Africa.

Primordialists admit that human beings can control their biological predispositions, that even genetically encoded behaviour can be overridden by cultural constraints. But they fail to specify under what precise conditions societal and ecological factors can modify 'the beast'. Culture as socialisation, repression and sublimation obviously has succeeded in restraining nepotism in favour of more universal solidarity at certain historical junctures. In other periods, those perceived incentives for inclusive collectivities have broken down and crude chauvinism, racism and xenophobia emerged. A historical and political analysis can shed more light on this question than the ahistorical, reductionist and biological emphasis of primordialism.

The liberal-left response is equally unsatisfactory (see for example, Hobsbawn 1990). It denounces the quest for peoplehood as a dangerous reversal into outdated nineteenth century localism and parochialism, a source of strife and intolerance. Whether the widespread search for identity and meaningful inclusion results in authoritarian fanaticism or democratic renewal of citizens' participation in smaller administrative units in East and Western Europe still hangs in the balance. But denunciation is no substitute for explanation.

J. Kenneth Galbraith (1990), among many others, has pointed out that equality and economic wellbeing is the great solvent for national, ethnic, racial or religious conflict. While it is undoubtedly true that ethnic conflict is nurtured by poverty and in turn deepens impoverishment, it is far from certain that economic wellbeing alone is sufficient for a strife-free society.

Affluence alone does not heal differential evaluation. If collective denigration persists despite wealth and power, or perhaps because of it, strife will continue, despite material contentment. The liberal Galbraith, like many Marxists, engages in economistic reductionism by ignoring the symbolic causes of intergroup antagonisms.

South African analysts (see Mzala, Jordan, Slovo In: Van Diepen 1988) in this tradition still speak about 'the material determination of social consciousness' (Taylor 1992) as if subjectivity and human agency could not possess a dynamic of its own. They generally lump race and ethnicity together and reject them as 'valid analytical categories' (Taylor). While both are obviously social constructions, the cultural meaning invested in ethnic differences can be defended as worthy of preservation while the pseudoscientific racial distinctions lack this cultural legitimacy. Clearly the surveys on ethnic attitudes in South Africa are often biased in so far as their questions already assume the existence of ethnic consciousness that is yet to be proven. But even if you do 'frame questions in terms other than ethnicity' (Taylor 1992:115) you still receive ethnic replies. This is not surprising in a society with a history of institutionalised ethnicity. But it is also not unique to South Africa. Apartheid built on linguistic and racial perceptions; apartheid reinforced ethnic cleavages; but it did not invent them altogether.

I shall argue that ethnonationalism should not be explained as a cultural given; an essentialist, perennial and transcendental phenomenon which exists 'independently of the actual beliefs and actions of those supposed to be part of it' (Linz 1985:249). Nor should nationalism be dismissed as a mere atavistic and reactionary response to be overcome by greater affluence, security and better education. Rather, ethnoregionalism in its many varieties is a reaction to intrusion and discrimination. It constitutes legitimate resistance and pathological expressions of exclusion and ethnocentrism. Nationalism mobilises organisational pressure in the political market while simultaneously providing a social identity with greater emotional appeal than interest-based class solidarity can offer.

Nationalist expressions are largely situationally determined. Group identity — as the anthropologist Fredrik Barth (1969) has stressed in his seminal essay — is fluid and malleable, responsive to mobilisation by ethnic entrepreneurs and expedient state policies. It is the specific historical political context that accounts for variations in the cohesiveness of nationalism, rates of ethnic mobilisation and degrees of ethnic or interest-based solidarity. Both the instrumental and symbolic functions of nationalism have to be assessed together. In short, ethnic or racial differences *per se* are never the cause of strife. It is a common fallacy to assume that cultural homogeneity ensures greater harmony or that diversity necessarily results in conflict. The Czechoslovakian case can illustrate this.

In Czechoslovakia a state was peacefully dissolved, despite few significant cultural differences between the two main groups. They practise the same religion, speak similar languages and have no history of serious intergroup conflicts. Moreover, the separation has remained unpopular with a majority of the population that preferred a unitary state. Yet ambitious politicians in both groups negotiated the dissolution. The more advanced and developed Czechs benefited from getting rid of a region with a structurally outdated heavy industry, particularly arms manufacturing. The Slovaks, on the other hand, symbolically liberated themselves from traditional Prague hegemony and arrogance. The Slovaks certainly will be economically worse off on their own, and the Czechs economically less attractive to outside investment without the larger market of the old federation. Yet economic considerations were not the prime reasons for the partition in the first place.

By Czechoslovakian standards South Africa represents the other extreme of an ethnically divided society with a history of minority domination and extreme racial discrimination. Yet it is precisely because of this history and the centripetal forces of an interdependent economy and interspersed population that the centrifugal tendencies are severely restrained. This explains the paradox that a culturally homogeneous state has fallen apart, while an ethnically divided society such as South Africa is well on the way toward eradicating tribalism in favour of common statehood.

ORIGINS AND EXPLANATIONS OF NATIONALISM

Nationalism can usefully be defined as politicised ethnicity.[1] Ethnicity represents a shared feeling of belonging, based on and expressed usually in common language, religion and homeland. Above all, ethnic group members imagine a common ancestry. It is important to remember that such self-conscious ethnic group awareness is a relatively recent historical phenomenon. Contrary to the nationalist myth that everyone has had a national identity from time immemorial, self-conscious nation-states seem linked to modernisation.

Nationalism as political consciousness of a common culture emerged with the decline of the absolutist state and the rise of nation-states alongside capitalist industrialisation in eighteenth and nineteenth century Europe. The political entities before this time were loosely co-ordinated empires in which relatively autonomous rulers formed shifting alliances over culturally heterogeneous populations. Culturally homogeneous populations at the periphery of the empire were considered 'barbarians'. The nation-state extended the traditional notion of kinship loyalty to a vast group with the same cultural markers such as language and religion. As Karl Deutsch (1969) has shown, this 'imagined community' was made possible with advances in transportation and communication techniques. Benedict Anderson's (1983) perceptive book *Imagined communities* explains the paradox that even without physical contact, people of a vast land nevertheless feel strong bonds of kinship. Historically, this imaginary vision of a national family became possible with the invention of print media. Thus, the feeling that there are others who hold similar opinions and beliefs created a national consciousness, mobilised by the intelligentsia and reinforced by their common language. 'Through that language, encountered at mother's knee and parted with only at the grave, pasts are restored, fellowships are imagined and futures dreamed' (Anderson 1983:140). A distinct language and/or religion marks the group as unique and gives it a common destiny.

Through such historically specific symbols, individuals are bound to a communality. Nationalism is not merely a convenient ruling-class ideology. Nor are nations' inventions, manufactured at will even where they do not exist, as Ernest Gellner (1983) would argue. Gellner underestimates human agency by stressing the almost automatic appearance of nations at certain stages of economic development. His critics, such as Anthony Smith (1987), who stress the historical and cultural formulations of nationalism, make a valid point but overrate historical continuity by tracing ethnic groups to the remotest antiquity. Smith is right by emphasising that genealogy cannot be manufactured arbitrarily. Indeed, the myth of common descent must have a historical foundation and unifying symbols. However, such reasoning all too easily confuses nationalism with the nation-state. It 'naturalises' historically contingent state formations. Most of the so-called nation-states are now ethnically mixed. Polyethnic states and supranational entities will dominate the future. The congruence of culture and state was a transitory European phenomenon in the nineteenth and early twentieth century, 'whereas the factors promoting ethnic mixing were enduring' (McNeill 1987).

The nation-state consolidated markets and motivated its members to discipline and warfare. Self-sacrifice in the service of the in-group against hostile out-groups became the hallmark of readily mobilisable national armies. While Marx expected worldwide capitalist expansion to be matched with international proletarian solidarity, competing bourgeoisies faced few difficulties in rallying their national class antagonists to war. As many sympathetic analysts (Giddens 1983; Hobsbawn 1977:13; Anderson 1983:13) have pointed out, 'the theory of nationalism represents Marxism's great historical failure' (Nairn 1977:329).

Yet the orthodox reference to manipulation fails to explain why people were so susceptible to embracing false consciousness. Giddens (1983:178) quite rightly insists: 'Nationalism is in substantial part a psychological phenomenon, involving felt needs and disposition'. The Frankfurt School has posited explanations for willing fascist mobilisation and anti-Semitism in their intriguing research on the 'authoritarian personality' (Adorno *et al.* 1949); they have isolated socialisation practises which make ego-weak characters dependent on stronger groups. The group becomes an extension of self: personal identity is borrowed from the group's identity. New insecurities resulting from the demise of traditional religion and the vagaries of industrialisation were addressed by the promise of being elevated through membership in a proud nation. Belonging to a community with destiny functioned to replace a lost faith. The nation guaranteed immortality. If there is one point of agreement in the vast research on intergroup relations, it is that ethnic antagonism in First World states does not depend on the behaviour of the minority, but has its cause in the vulnerable identities, low self-esteem and perceived inadequacies of those who claim insider status. Identification with stronger groups and leaders provides emotional satisfaction to minimise or overcome status insecurity. And this remedy appeals particularly to downwardly mobile sectors of the population threatened by rapid social and economic change. Thus, perceived personal inadequacies are compensated for by group identification. Nationalist mobilisers use kinship symbols to call 'brothers and sisters' back home. The strong leader becomes a father substitute and the nation becomes a super-family where class divisions and political differences are minimised by the illusion of early childhood comfort.

With its emphasis on kinship bonds and common origin, nationalism has a multi-class appeal. Objective conflicting interests are neutralised. Politics, Hitler used to exhort, have to cease in the national family. Gender inequalities, too are subsumed by the 'community'. In her fascinating study *Mothers in the fatherland,* Claudia Koonz (1987) has shown how the male Nazi society elevated women as providers of emotional comfort in the home where men could recover from their schizophrenic roles in the public sphere.

Despite the seeming revival of ethnicity around the globe, the trend is towards a further restriction of sovereignty. There are increasing limits to the right of self-determination, dictated by economic imperatives and the fragile ecological interdependence of the planet. It is perhaps too early to state with any certainty to what extent we are also moving toward a world culture where people on different continents watch the same mindless TV shows, long for the same fashion, listen to similar music and share similar dreams. The trend toward cultural colonisation also produces resistance, rooted in different regional histories. The capitalist fantasy of the world as an unbounded, unified consumer market is confronted by a new awareness of continued inequality, offset by the symbolic gratification of cultural superiority. Paradoxically, more contact and objective interdependence parallels increased subjective differentiation. Cosmopolitanism still faces many obstacles.

At the same time, a static, fixed ethnicity is questionable. The notion of an innate primordialism which naturally binds people together belongs to a past period of traditional societies. A single identity also becomes meaningless in the light of the multiple identities people have to adopt. A single identity applies to a bygone age of ascribed lives.

In short, identity and nationalism must be seen as historical products. The more options people have to develop their own meaningful identity from several situations, the less they need to stick to one traditional identity. At the same time people change their self-ascribed identities frequently according to circumstances. In modern settings this makes societal alignments unpredictable and volatile. Solidarity and antagonism live side by side.

Despite its emphasis on unity, a nationalist movement is rarely monolithic. At the symbolic level, the intra-nationalist conflicts are often based on the interpretation of history. In the reconstruction of history, symbols become the subjects of contest and, as in religious schisms, signify in-group or out-group membership. It is often overlooked that those intra-group cleavages surpass the conflicts with 'true outsiders' in emotional intensity for the participants. It also demonstrates how fragile the ethnic or religious links in the national community are in reality.

Most analysts of nationalism have pointed to the Janus face of nationalism: the enmity for out-groups paralleling amity for the in-group. Ferocious hostility goes together with self-sacrifice and altruism. Love for home, the special sound of language and music, the superior taste of food, the landscape of childhood, unique roots and histories are usually elevated to an ethnocentric rejection of the stranger. At best, non-ethnics are frequently excluded from human concerns, at worst they are exploited and inferiorised as scapegoats. Nationalist protagonists celebrate self-determination, sovereignty and cultural freedom as the highest goods. But all too frequently the reactionary consequences of chauvinist sovereignty are overlooked. 'What higher good is served when Azeris "self-determine" to massacre Armenians, or vice versa? 'Given the deep hatreds that many Soviet nationalities have for one another, would it really be a step forward for each of them to have independent armed forces,' asks a reviewer, J. Arch Getty (1990), sceptically. Indeed, the emphasis on native tongue and rejection of imperialist languages, such as Russian, also isolate the children of the nationalists. The cultural ghettos of group pride imprison its adherents voluntarily and unnecessarily.

Needless to say, such warnings do not justify the suppression of native tongues as, for example, formerly practised by Turkey against speakers of Kurdish. Indeed, such policies of prohibiting the public use of minority languages amount to 'linguicide' (Skutnabb-Kangas).

Policies of multiculturalism and ideologies of patriotism propagate a different basis for state cohesion. Patriotism must be distinguished from nationalism. Patriotism is the unifying concept in immigrant societies, such as the United States or Canada, the former multinational state of the Soviet Union or the artificial states of colonial creation in Africa. With a variety of groups of different religions and languages, the myth of common origin obviously cannot be invoked. In these multi-ethnic societies, the creation of the state is celebrated in the flag, oath of allegiance and national anthems in very much the same way as in nation-states. However, patriotic loyalty is not based on a common history but on the unique opportunities that the new 'fatherland' is perceived to provide. Citizenship is the common bond providing equal rewards. Such promises to and demands upon newcomers can form as cohesive a state as nationalist mobilisation.

MYTH AND REALITY OF NON-RACIALISM

Some of the most perceptive South African analysts (Giliomee & Schlemmer 1989:213) warn against obscuring 'the essential reality of the conflict, namely, that it is primarily a struggle between Afrikaner and African nationalists'. African nationalism, of which the ANC is seen as a vanguard, 'would promote cultural homogeneity ... and would impart to the state an African character to which all personnel would have to subscribe, whether they be Africans or not'.

Such an assumption about the dominant opposition movement is doubtful. The ANC and the National Party and even Inkatha now promote an inclusive South Africanism, not an exclusive nationalism. Non-racialism is the antithesis of communalism and nationalism. To be sure, non-racialism has not yet been tested and may well not last if it fails to be effective. While mere promises and policy statements should not be taken at face value, they should also not be cast aside as untenable propaganda, adopted under the pressure of external recognition. Non-racialism is not an 'unbreakable thread', as the author of an idealistically titled collection implies (Frederikse 1991). It has to be constantly striven for against many odds. Non-racialism also does not imply colour blindness, which would be a naive assumption after a long history of apartheid. Non-racialism merely holds out the promise that the state will not recognise or tolerate race as a public and legal criterion of exclusion, private racism notwithstanding. In practice, South Africa resembles a multiracial rather than a non-racial society.

Contrary to the assertion that the ANC/PAC split amounted to a mere leadership quarrel and that both are nationalists, a fundamental ideological cleavage still exists between nationalist Africanists in the PAC and the non-racial, inclusive Charterists in the rational Enlightenment tradition. One of the more remarkable developments in resistance politics has been the recent hegemony of the ANC's view over the Africanists. A counterracism would have great emotional appeal among a frustrated black township youth. Yet despite the dormant PAC and the more serious Black Consciousness challenge in the 1970s, the inclusive non-racialism of the ANC has so far carried the day. This happened not because of outside expectations or because non-racialism offered better strategic benefits to an exiled movement dependent on foreign support, as ANC critics charge. ANC members, particularly those in the internationalist SACP tradition, have generally internalised a deeply felt universalism, welcoming anyone who shared their ideological convictions. Intolerance toward proponents of ethnic nationalism extends among whites and blacks alike. There is no evidence that Xhosa culture has been elevated to an ethnocentric ideal, although it would only seem natural that people enjoy speaking their mother tongue and displaying pride in their cultural heritage.

Critics hold the inevitable affirmative action programmes of any post-apartheid government as proof of racial group preferences. But having the nation's ethnic diversity reflected in the senior civil service or corporate culture does not constitute reverse discrimination, merely the restoration of equity. It is also not unreasonable that after centuries of denigration, the black majority would expect its historical presence to be respected and represented among the state symbols. Such symbolic recognition of majority culture may indeed require a black African rather than a white or Indian as president of a ruling ANC party — but that would not contradict the principle of non-racialism. After centuries of racial discrimination, non-racialism cannot mean colour blindness. Identical treatment of the races could itself be discriminatory because it would leave apartheid's legacies intact by focusing on equality of opportunities rather than equality of results. Colour-blind equality of opportunities without state intervention merely continues to favour those who monopolised the opportunities in the past.

IS THERE A SOUTH AFRICAN NATION?

A vast literature reveals little agreement on whether a common South African nation exists, or whether it should be forged, as well as on how the resurgence of ethnonationalism elsewhere in the world affects South Africa. Neville Alexander (1985) believes — as do most anti-apartheid campaigners in rival movements — that a South African nation will emerge through working-class struggle, reinforced by a common national language and curriculum. Pierre van den Berghe (1991), evaluating experiences elsewhere, considers such programmes of nation-building likely rationalisations for nation-killing (ethnocide) by dominant groups in the name of combating divisive tribalism by ethnic competitors. Similarly, Donald Horowitz (1991) detects what he calls a meta-conflict among some dozen vastly different interpretations of what the South African problem is all about but would be encouraged by the emerging cross-racial party affiliation. The Russian scholar and South African specialist Irina Filatova (1991), in a thorough and perceptive review of the debate, concludes that all oppositional movements except Inkatha equate nation-building with socialism, 'though they mean completely different things by it'. After a similar review, Johan Degenaar (1991) recommends that all projects to forge a South African nation be dropped and the focus be placed on building democracy. But can South Africa ignore the forces of ethnonationalism because nationalism has been associated with apartheid? In particular, how can the Afrikaner right-wing and Zulu nationalists be accommodated, save by a high degree of regional autonomy in a genuine federal state?

The difficult task of nation-building without common symbols and a unifying history has been highlighted by the debate about divisive national anthems and flags at sports events. A South African nation has yet to be born. South Africa at present constitutes an economic and political entity, but not an emotional one. Neutral symbols negotiated for the Olympic Games are widely considered an unsatisfactory compromise. On home grounds, spectators at national competitions defiantly raise their symbols to the embarrassment of officials on both sides, who hope to use sport to forge a common South Africanism. Thus, the ANC's Steve Tshwete (*Business Day*, 20 August 1992) puts the onus on spectators by depicting rugby either as 'a reconciler of people or they can use it as a ritual that celebrates conquest and domination of black people'. Judging by the emotional nature of rugby or soccer matches, they seem to fit neither of these purposes for the sports-loving public. As is true the world over, sports teams provide group identity for atomised individuals who symbolically borrow strength from the victory of their side. This immense psychological gratification has little to do with reconciliation or domination of the colonial outsider. It merely reflects the historical segregation of sports in a divided society where the different segments, on the whole, play different sports: Afrikaners cherish rugby culture, with all its customary tribal machoism, while soccer, with much more multiracial teams but uniracial spectators, has developed into an equivalent obsession in the townships.[2]

Regis Debray, a former revolutionary activist, once wrote that 'during every crisis in a capitalist country it has been shown that nationalism is stronger than class identity even among the main mass of the people, the working class'. This empirical evidence does not prove Walker Connor's (1984:5) contention 'that the most fundamental divisions of humankind are the many vertical cleavages that divide people into ethno-national groups', let alone Van den Berghe's (1979:58) point that communalism 'may well have a genetic basis'. Nonetheless, such evidence requires the unrealised potential of non-communal identity to be reconciled with the contrary evidence that ethnic mobilisation seems to have been far more successful than interest-based class solidarity in offering meaningful explanations of life experiences.

Ancient tribalism or even evolutionary advantageous genetic conditioning is most often cited as the cause of ethnic friction. In this view, ethnic identity constitutes a self-generated perception, independent of state designs and social conditions. Ethnic antagonisms, however, always occur in specific circumstances. Genetic predilections and references to tribalism, therefore, do not explain the causes of a conflict but merely anthropologise antagonisms as eternal, historical givens (Vail 1989). In failing to specify the causes of a particular antagonism, the notion of tribalism also implies that a conflict cannot be solved, only contained. It is this methodological deficit of the concept — rather than its association with Africa and 'backwardness' — that makes tribalism as a label, let alone as an explanation, useless and objectionable, regardless of whether it is also applied to European conflicts.

In South Africa communal divisions, in terms of self-identification, are not as deep as elsewhere. In spite of, or more likely, because of the official classification in the apartheid state, more people label themselves South Africans, rather than black or white. Coloureds, Indians and English-speaking whites in particular, to a lesser extent, urban Africans, and increasingly Afrikaners too, stress their South African identity before their subgroup. In any case, the two identities are not incompatible and can be held simultaneously, as even Zulu nationalist Buthelezi has frequently pointed out. In modern states, people can adopt multiple identities.

In Northern Ireland it is impossible to be anything other than republican or loyalist, nationalist or unionist, Irish or British — either by choice or by designation of the adversary. In South Africa, however, a widespread resentment developed against communal identities and racial categories. Now, non-racialism and common citizenship encourage the demise of racial identities. Black and white can celebrate their common South Africanness because they both stand to benefit from it. In the truly divided Ireland, the communal conflict amounts to a zero-sum game, winners and losers; in South Africa all can be winners if they compromise.

Moreover, in Northern Ireland the adversaries do not even use the same name for their land. Catholics hardly identify with the labels Ulster and British; Protestants eschew the label Irish and *vice versa*. Each side plays its own sports, and in the one sport popular in both camps (soccer), they support different teams. In South Africa only the small Africanist PAC and Black Consciousness groups prefer the name Azania, and all groups rejoice over the successes of a mixed South African Olympic team, an *esprit de corps* that Mandela views as one of the crucial mechanisms for nation-building.

The fundamental cleavages in South African society do not revolve around issues of culture or race and identity, but social equity and increasing intraclass divisions, particularly in black society. In all surveys blacks and whites differ markedly in their assessment of their economic life-chances, their grievances about unfair treatment, their hopes or anxieties about their material security, and hence their satisfaction with their quality of life. Rather than ethnicity, it is 'class' (jobs, income, property) that matters most to blacks and whites. In an index of 24 policy issues with conflict potential that Schlemmer (1992:4-6) compiled, affirmative action with regard to job replacement in the civil service, land redistribution and higher taxation to support the poor revealed the greatest discrepancies among the racial groups. Symbolic issues such as official languages, flags and anthems, change of place-names, school integration, or black retribution for mistreatment (Nuremberg trials), ranked low in conflict potential. Schlemmer diagnoses black rank-and-file attitudes as inclined towards compromise on symbolic issues about which whites feel strongly, particularly Afrikaans as an official language. However, there is greater adamancy for demands on economic equality. Schlemmer concludes that the 'results suggest that culture and identity may not be as divisive in South Africa as the current experience in Eastern Europe would lead one to expect'. Our analysis (Adam &

Moodley 1993) confirms this finding and suggests that, paradoxically, in a society with the most open racial oppression, race relations may be far more harmonious under certain conditions than in the United States, Israel or other divided societies. The reasons for this optimistic assessment of the promise of relative non-racialism lie mainly in a different psychological predisposition of the colonised in an industrial settler society.

American and European socio-psychological research findings on the psychic scars of oppression have often been uncritically applied to South Africa. It was assumed as obvious that the victims of a legal system of racial domination would show its marks, such as self-hatred and low self-esteem. The 'identification with the aggressor', that Bettelheim diagnosed among some inmates of Nazi concentration camps, would surely characterise the marginalised objects of decade-long apartheid domination. Yet, apartheid has had, in many ways, the opposite effect, serving as a protective buffer against the psychological damage in discriminated minorities noticed elsewhere. In legally equal societies the victims easily blame themselves as individuals for failure; in an institutionalised apartheid order of collective discrimination, the 'system' was clearly at fault. Because the apartheid state lacked worldwide legitimacy, its victims responded with resistance rather than identification. Where 'passing' was legally excluded, it made no sense to strive for assimilation and choose the oppressor as reference group.

The dominant mindset of active, resilient protest rather than passive acceptance of subordinate conditions was further reinforced by numerical majority status. It makes a crucial difference to self-perception whether the discriminated constitute an indigenous majority or an imported minority. Moreover, the real clout of numbers and self-reliant institutions enforces relationships of objective interdependence which minorities, dependent on goodwill or their special skills, lack. This sense of confident self-legitimacy is enhanced by the retention of precolonial language in South Africa. Unlike African Americans, most South African blacks speak an indigenous mother tongue through which they retain a vital link with the land of conquest which New World slavery cut. South African subordinates therefore show little of the ambivalent identities that characterise minorities elsewhere, who are made to feel that they do not belong. Most South Africans of all races do not share such self-doubts but confront each other as equals. This perception of equality remains an important precondition of successful negotiations and pacting, and perhaps even a minimal sense of common nationhood. Therefore, the chances of a future South African democracy and stability do not falter on incompatible identities but depend mainly on the promise of greater material equality in a common economy.

NOTES

1. For the sake of simplicity, nationalism is used here synonymously and interchangeably with ethnicity, communalism, separatism, ethno-regionalism, sectarianism, populism, chauvinism, xenophobia, racism and similar group-centred, exclusionary and ethno centric tendencies, in contrast to more internationalist, universalist, pluralist, cosmopolitan, multicultural or individualistic preferences for political organisation and personal identity. The content and difference of these labels will become clear in their application to concrete developments and areas.

2. The emotional outlet for much of the need for group identification in Western societies has become mass spectator sport. The mechanism of identification with a nation or soccer team does not differ. The sports team functions as a less violent but emotionally equally gratifying substitute. Konrad Lorenz once proposed replacing wars with more sports warfare. He ignored that the predisposition to fight real wars is perpetuated and reinforced in the sports arena. Racist antagonism, sexual aggression and sheer violence by the repressed and rejected merge legitimately during the weekly rituals in the stadium. Neither the elitist dismissal of hooliganism nor the romanticisation of proletarian culture at its best, explains the euphoria and rare sense of community felt by thousands of strangers who actively participate in a match through their shouts, singing and genuine identification with their team. Olympic Games and Nazi rallies bear a striking resemblance.

REFERENCES

ADAM, Heribert & MOODLEY, Kogila. 1993. *The negotiated revolution.* Johannesburg: Jonathan Ball.

ADORNO, T. W. *et al.* 1949. New York: Harpers.

ALEXANDER, Neville. 1985. *Sow the wind: contemporary speeches.* Johannesburg: Skotaville.

ANDERSON, Benedict. 1983. *Imagined communities.* London: Verso.

BARTH, Fredrik. 1969. *Ethnic groups and boundaries.* Boston: Little, Brown.

CONNOR, Walker. 1978. A nation is a nation, is a state, is an ethnic group, is a ..., *Ethnic and Racial Studies,* 1 October.

CONNOR, Walker. 1984. *The national question in Marxist-Leninist theory and strategy.* Princeton: Princeton University Press.

CONNOR, Walker. 1987. Ethno-nationalism. In: WEINER, M. & HUNTINGTON, S. P. (eds). *Understanding political development.* Boston: Little, Brown.

DEGENAAR, Johan. 1991. *The myth of a South African nation.* Idasa occasional paper. Cape Town: Idasa.

DEUTSCH, Karl. 1969. *Nationalism and its alternatives.* New York: Knopf.

FILATOVA, Irina. 1991. *One, two or many? Aspects of the South African debate on the concept of nation.* Unpublished manuscript.

FREDERIKSE, Julie. 1991. *The unbreakable thread: non-racialism in South Africa.* Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

GALBRAITH, John Kenneth. 1990. *The rush to capitalism.* New York: Review, 25 October.

GEERTZ, Clifford. 1973. *The interpretation of cultures: selected essays*. New York: Basic Books.

GELLNER, Ernest. 1983. *Nations and nationalism*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

GETTY, J. Arch. 1990. *Review of B. Nahayolo & V. Swoboda. Soviet disunion*. London: Review, August.

GIDDENS, Anthony. 1983. Nation-states and violence. In: *Social theory and modern sociology*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

GILIOMEE, Hermann & SCHLEMMER, Lawrence (eds). 1989. *From apartheid to nation-building*. Cape Town: Oxford University Press.

GLAZER, Nathan. 1981. The universalization of ethnicity. In: STEVEN, L. & SPIEGEL (eds). *At issue: politics in the world arena*. New York: St Martins' Press.

HOBSBAWN, Eric. 1977. Some reflections on the break-up of Britain. *New Left Review*, 105, September/October.

HOBSBAWN, E. J. 1990. *Nations and nationalism since 1780. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.*

HOROWITZ, Donald. 1985. *Ethnic groups in conflict*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

HOROWITZ, Donald. 1991. *A democratic South Africa? Constitutional engineering in a divided society*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

ISAACS, Henry. 1975. *Idols of the tribe: group identity and political change*. New York: Harper & Row.

KOONZ, Claudia. 1987. *Mothers in the fatherland*. New York: St Martin's Press.

LINZ, J. 1985. From primordialism to nationalism. In: TIRYAKIAN, E.A. & ROGOWSKI, R. (eds). *New nationalisms of the developed West: Toward Explanation.*. Boston: Allen & Unwin.

McNEILL, William H. 1987. *Polyethnicity and national unity in world history*. Toronto: Toronto University Press.

NAIRN, Tom. 1977. *The break-up of Britain*. London: New Left Books.

SCHLEMMER, Lawrence. 1992. Conflict in the new South Africa: class culture and power. *Information Update*. Spring:4-6.

SMITH, Anthony D. 1987. *The ethnic origin of nations*. Oxford: Blackwell.

TAYLOR, Rupert. 1992. Review of D. Horowitz 'A democratic South Africa'. *Review of African Political Economy*, 55:113-121.

VAIL, Leroy (ed.). 1989. *The creation of tribalism in Southern Africa*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

VAN DEN BERGHE, Pierre L. (ed.). 1979. *The liberal dilemma in South Africa*. London: Croom Helm.

VAN DEN BERGHE, Pierre L. 1983. *The ethnic phenomenon*. New York: Elsevier.

VAN DEN BERGHE, Pierre L. (ed.). 1991. *State violence and ethnicity*. Niwot: University of Colorado Press.

VAN DIEPEN, Maria. (ed.). 1988. *The national question in South Africa*. London: Zed Books.

CHAPTER 4

The awkward issue: some comments on the South African debate on nation-building and ethnicity

Irina Filatova

There are hundreds of definitions of ethnicity and nationalism. In the contribution by H. Adam alone (see Chapter 3) there are several. It is a matter of taste and ideology to select those most appropriate to one's own vision of these phenomena. I would stress two that seem most important to me. Although they do not cover the whole range of characteristics of both ethnicity and nationalism, they explain a lot.

'Ethno-regionalism in its many varieties is a reaction to intrusion and discrimination' writes Adam. The definition is too self-limiting. It could be much more generalised. Why only 'ethno-regionalism'? Why only 'to intrusion and discrimination'? They key word in this definition is 'reaction'. Not only ethno-regionalism, but any nationalism and, to a very large extent, ethnic identity itself is a reaction. And not only to intrusion and discrimination, but to any kind of interference, such as perceived or real threat to privilege, imagined or real danger, frustration at the loss of past glory, or fostering of ethnic characteristics and separation.

Adam's definition is one of many similar ones. It is very close, for example, to that of Isaiah Berlin (in essence, not in words). The philosopher called nationalism 'the bent twig' (Berlin 1991:238-261) which is not just an elegant phrase, but also a most useful and practical approach. Probably, it does not give the complete picture, but an aspect or an element of reaction is unavoidably important at every instance of nationalist or ethnic emotions and practices.

'Nationalist expressions are largely situationally determined' and 'ethnic antagonisms ... always occur in specific circumstances,' writes Adam, and rightly so. Ethnicity is also situationally determined and manifests itself in specific circumstances. It is interesting to note in this connection the extent to which, not only the phenomenon itself but the debate around it is situationally determined and reactional to historical circumstances and political patterns.

The greater part of the South African anti-apartheid academic writing on ethnicity has for more than a decade been, and remains, anti-primordialist, that is, centred on proving that ethnicity is 'invented', 'created', 'imagined', recent and superfluous.[1] On the other hand, a very significant part of Russian intellectual thinking on ethnicity has for some time been primordialist and is becoming increasingly so.[2]

The pointing of fingers and the calling of names such as 'conservative' and 'reactionary' is counterproductive. In both Russia and South Africa researchers were directed by their academic visions of the issue. There is hardly any reason to doubt the honesty of either. However in both cases an academic approach itself was to a very large extent politically defined. It was a reaction to official concepts, imposed on the Soviet and South African societies by the regimes, which had devastating results. As Steve Biko put it: 'People are shaped by the system even in their consideration of approaches against the system ...' (Gerhart 1978:287).

The primordialist and ethnically divisive approaches of the successive apartheid governments and their attempts to artificially and violently curb integrationist tendencies in the society, have illegitimised not only the notion, but even the term 'ethnicity' for the anti-apartheid South Africa, at least for the time being. To kill the 'beast' South African and South Africanist academics are now trying to circumvent the name by replacing it with something else (identity, culture, etc.).

Soviet attempts at forging a 'super-ethnic community — the Soviet people' — by artificially fostering integrationist tendencies and in many cases Russification, ignoring existing contradictions and differences, denigrating local languages, humiliating local prides and suppressing many features of local cultures have compromised the notion of 'created' or 'imagined' ethnicities in the Soviet Union. The former Soviets and Sovietologists are now engaged in reviving and promoting separate development and primordialist approaches.

History staged a 'clean' experiment, as if specifically selecting Russia and South Africa to teach a couple of mutual political lessons to each other, and to enable researchers to make a good academic comparative analysis. In both cases the lesson, however, is lost. Although compromised in South Africa, the ideals of territorial ethnicity, primordialist interpretation of the notion of ethnicity, and legal discrimination as a means of protecting ethnic nations, have massive followings in Russia and other former Soviet republics — both among academics and the general public. Although compromised in Russia, ideas of 'nation-building' from above, of forging different-level identities in a multi-ethnic society, unitarism or federalism (*vs* mono-ethnic states) are often seen in South Africa as the means of consolidating society, both at academic and political levels.

In his otherwise brilliant paper, presented at a recent international ethnicity conference in Grahamstown, a famous American anthropologist, John Comaroff, dismissed the Soviet experience of nation-building with the joke 'USSR became USS-were' (1993). His attitude is not unique. In fact, it is typical for the academic community all over the world, doubtlessly including anti-apartheid South Africa. The Soviet experience is perceived as bad by both the left and the right, by nationalists and internationalists, and thus is not worthy of study.

There is little doubt that it was bad. However, it was one of the greatest experiments in nation-building worldwide. With the growing importance of ethnic and nationality factors, to rejoice at the failure of Soviet nation-building while ignoring any attempt to understand reasons for it, seems too much of a luxury.

Discussing South Africa's future, Adam finds several reasons for optimism: '... despite the high visibility of racial boundaries, there are common languages and religions; there is a considerable geographical interspersal, and, above all, there is thorough economic interdependence. These factors combine to produce different intergroup relations in South Africa than in countries with distinct nationalities, each in their own territory.'

Whether by the last phrase Adam means largely Eastern Europe, and whether the Soviet Union is included, is not quite clear. The obvious fact, however, is that this comparison would prove the whole construction somewhat artificial.

Russia had it all: despite the high visibility of ethnic (racial) group boundaries, there was a widely spread common language and all-pervasive ideology; there was considerable geographical interspersal and intermarriage (65 million Soviets lived outside the territories of their ethnic groups; every sixth family was mixed); and, above all, there was, and is, a very thorough economic interdependence. However, these factors combined have not produced intergroup relations in the Soviet Union different from the countries with distinct nationalities each in their own territories. Except for an element of wishful thinking, so common to any debate on nation-building, there is little to prove why they should do so in South Africa.

Leaving aside comparisons, the present debate on ethnicity and nation-building tends to take for granted certain concepts and notions, which in reality may be misconceptions.

The concept of 'nation-building' itself is one of the examples. At least two prominent South Africanists have already challenged the validity of the term. J. Degenaar (1991) offered democracy, and H. Adam (1992) propagated patriotism as an alternative. Both ideas went somewhat unnoticed.

However, is it necessary to build a South African nation? Or, for that matter, is it possible? Few examples would support the idea of successful nation-building unless the process unfolds naturally. Experiments in nation-building, or nation-dividing from the top, more often than not, lead to exactly the opposite results. Both the South African and the Russian experiences seem to have proved that.

Probably the future South African leadership will be more skilful, sophisticated and experienced than the governments that have failed in the past — and it will succeed. The question remains whether the impossibly difficult task of building a South African nation, and not just a democratic state, is really indispensable. Probably there is something in the idea of building a nation that makes it more attractive than simple allegiance and loyalty to the state. It remains to be seen whether the attraction counterbalances the difficulties on the way.

'The disintegration of official Marxism-Leninism leaves an ideological vacuum that is increasingly filled with nationalism', writes Adam (see Chapter 3). This betrays a very common belief that Marxism-Leninism and nationalism are incompatible (see for example Connor 1984).

In theory and in wording the ideal Marxism-Leninism is really internationalist. In many cases it is internationalist in practice as well. I am glad that Adam mentioned the internationalist influence of the South African communists on the ANC. Whatever the wrongs or failures of the world communist movement, angry denunciations do not constitute analysis. The internationalist influence of the SACP on the nationalist movement in South Africa has already played an important role in the history of this country, and I am not sure that in the near future it will not be the communists to whom South Africa's minorities may appeal for reason and restraint.

This certainly does not mean that communism and ethnic nationalism, or even chauvinism, are incompatible. Theory is often different from ideology, particularly state ideology, and both differ from practice. Practices of the Soviet Union and other East European countries, and the current alliance of several communist groups with chauvinists in Russia,[3] contextualise D. P. Moynihan's phrase 'national proletarian internationalism' (1993).

A very popular comparison of ' ... simultaneous denationalisation in Western Europe and renationalisation in Eastern Europe,' however attractive, presents another common misconception. There is little of what could be called denationalisation in Western Europe. The European economic union is not exactly a result of 'denationalisation', and nationalist emotions in Western Europe are still there and are probably growing. Ethno-national, and even ethno-regional, fights continue, although the fronts have changed. The growth of the nationalist movement in Germany (largely anti-Turkish, but far from only that), the surfacing of anti-Indian sentiment in Britain and the occasional racial clashes in France may well be the rearguard battles of the dying ethnicity, but they may also be the whirlwind before the storm.

Strange as it may seem, the second part of the quotation is also not quite correct. Ethnic nationalisms have always been present in Soviet politics. They took different forms and shapes, however, as all other ethnic nationalisms do everywhere in the world. The flattering concept of 'the great Russian people', 'the elder brother in the family of Soviet nations', anti-Semitic campaigns in the late forties to early fifties and during the seventies and eighties, and the growth of local party nationalisms in the Soviet republics during the Brezhnev era, were only several manifestations of the phenomenon. The novelty of the present situation in Eastern Europe lies only in the re-emergence of the will of ethnic nations to form ethnic states.

This desire to have mono-ethnic states was not expressed, by the way, in the fact of the disintegration of the Soviet Union. Nationalist movements were absolutely central to the process of dismantling the Soviet state. However, it did not disintegrate into nation-states, but into multi-ethnic states again. Without the support of ethnic minorities in the republics, their independence from Moscow would never have been won. Even in the Baltic republics, the votes of the Russian-speakers legitimised the overwhelming results of independence referendums. In the Ukraine or in Kazakhstan, with their huge Russian populations (in some regions the majority), independence could not have been proclaimed, or would not have worked, if the minorities had not supported it. Independence or disintegration of the Soviet Union was a political act, as was the disintegration of the British and other colonial empires.

What followed after that was really meaningful in terms of nationalism, and the new stage brought about attempts at creating mono-ethnic states by discriminatory anti-minority legislation, media campaigns, wars for independence, etc.

I have already mentioned that anti-primordialism and anti-neo-primordialism figure powerfully in the South African debate on ethnicity. The validity of this approach is obvious, but with the changing political climate one gets the impression that something important is lacking there. The fight was central when primordialism was the core of the official apartheid policy. Now that transition is under way, nation-building is being debated and primordialists among South African academics clearly constitute a minority, the political pathos of antiprimordialism seems gone.

Let me also make a contribution to anti-primordialism by offering the well-known but nevertheless conspicuous example of the Russian Cossacks. The Cossacks, — a picturesque group of the Russian Imperial army, famous for their military skills, loyalty to the Russian Crown, and ferocity against the Red Army, — came into being in the fifteenth-sixteenth centuries as a hired military force. At first the

71

Cossacks acquired land on the outskirts of the Russian empire independently, and later received it from the Crown for service. They also protected the Russian frontiers in exchange for land. They were incorporated into the Russian Empire in the sixteenth century, and into the Russian army in the eighteenth century. On the eve of the 1917 upheavals there were probably about 4,5 million Cossacks (about 2,4 per cent of the population of Russian empire). They suffered a great deal during the Civil War and Stalin's purges. Surviving descendants are now reorganising their armies.

The majority of the Cossacks are ethnic Russians, but there are also strong Kalmyk, Ukrainian, Ossetian, Tatar and Bashkir elements among them, and even some Yakut and Evenk. Cossacks speak Russian in addition to their native languages (where Russian itself is not native). They have a distinct group culture of their own, but at the same time they preserve some traditions of their corresponding ethnic groups. Historically they were scattered over all the territory of the Russian empire, and this situation still persists.

Some Cossacks are satisfied with being considered a class, but the majority claim they are a distinct ethnic group, and demand not only political but also territorial autonomy. The latter status was readily granted to them by *The Natal Mercury* in its issue of 2 December 1992, but it is still being questioned by many Russian specialists.[4]

So what? The problem with the Cossacks and many other groups is that evidently being constructs, (ethnic, religious, or social) they nevertheless perceive themselves as an ethnic group — and to deny them this status would only foster their identity. Obviously, Cossack ethnicity does not exist; it is being invented right now. This does not make their group aspirations and grievances less real, less emotional, or less entrenched; their demands less vociferous; their desire to be considered an ethnic group less founded; or the problems connected with these demands less difficult.

This is exactly what seems to remain outside the framework of anti-primordialist debate. However artificial, 'constructed', or 'made', or 'invented' and recent, ethnic identity is no less important for its bearers, and probably more so. Problems connected with it have no less politically destructive potential than they would if ethnicity was not a construct but, say, an inbred physical quality (as for example, a popular Russian academic, Lev Gumilev, considers). 'Imagined' does not mean less real or important, and that is an area which debate on primordialism does not reach.

Adam believes that 'Afrikaner right-wing and Zulu nationalists' can be accommodated only by a high degree of regional autonomy in a genuine federal state'. The problem is to accommodate not only Afrikaner and Zulu nationalists, but other nationalists as well, the majority, to whom federalism may be unacceptable.

Every model, however good in abstraction, cannot be discussed outside its historical and political context. Probably either federalism or unitarism would solve South African problems without bloodshed and much delay, but it may be possible only with the consent of all the majorities and the minorities on the issue, otherwise any scheme is not workable. How great is the chance of such a really national accord?

South African anti-apartheid writing on nation-building is largely optimistic. I think there are reasons for optimism with the strong and long internationalist tradition in the anti-apartheid movement and a big dose of anti-racialism injected into the South African society by the apartheid regime itself. Yet, much of the reasoning behind optimism seems based on the sandy grounds of wishful thinking. Are 'communal divisions' in South Africa really 'not as deep as elsewhere'? Do 'most South Africans of all races' really 'confront each other as equals'? And, finally, does Adam really believe that affirmative action is going to be limited to the sphere of national symbols — the only one he mentions? This sphere is one in which wishful thinking may be particularly dangerous.

Ethnicity has always been an awkward issue everywhere in the world. More so here, in South Africa, where it has been politicised by the regime. For quite a time any debate on this issue has been taboo in anti-apartheid circles, which was understandable, but has not done any good to present policy-making. It is not the case any longer, but politics still dictates the scope of academic debate, which may be not the most fruitful development both for policy-making or research in future.

NOTES

1. Important contributions to the trend were: Marks and Trapido (1987) and Vail (1989). Anti-promordialism figured very prominently at the latest conference on ethnicity: 'Ethnicity, identity and nationalism in South Africa: comparative perspectives' (20-24 April 1993, Grahamstown).
2. From the works of the head of the official Soviet school, Iu. V. Bromley (see, for example, his *Ocherki teorii etnosa* (Essays on the theory of ethnos), Moscow, 1983), to the writings of his opponent L.N. Gumilev (for instance, his *Etnogenez i biosfera zemili* (Ethnogenesis and the biosphere of earth), Leningrad, 1989). Strange as it may seem, Stalin's definition of nation also included some elements of primordialism. For the summary of the debate around this definition, see Filatova 1992.
3. One of the notorious examples is that of the Russian chauvinist organisation 'Pamiat' using the headquarters of the Moscow's Sverdlovskii region party committee for its meetings before it physically attacked several democratic writers during their meeting in the Soviet Writers' Union in April 1989.
4. For the summary of the debate see *Independent Newspaper from Russia*, VIII, issue 6-7, July 1992, pp. 10-11.

REFERENCES

ADAM, H. 1992. *The politics of identity: nationalism, patriotism and multiculturalism.* Paper presented at UCT History Department seminar, 15 October.

BERLIN, I. 1991. *The crooked timber of humanity.* New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

COMAROFF, J. 1993. *Perceptions and self-perceptions of ethnicity and identity.* Paper delivered at international conference on 'Ethnicity, identity and nationalism in South Africa: comparative perspectives. Grahamstown, 20-24 April.

CONNOR, W. 1984. *The national question in Marxist-Leninist theory and strategy.* Princeton: Princeton University Press.

DEGENAAR, J. 1991. Nations and nationalism. The myth of a South Africa nation. IDASA. (Occasional Paper, No. 40).

FILATOVA, I. 1992. *Contested domains: national identity and conflict in Russia and South Africa.* South African Institute of International Affairs. (Occasional Paper).

GERHART, G.M. 1978. *Black power in South Africa. The evolution of an ideology.* Berkeley, California: University of California Press.

MARKS, S. & TRAPIDO, S. (eds). 1987. *The politics of race, class and nationalism in twentieth century South Africa.* London: Longman.

MOYNIHAN, D.P. 1993. *Pandemonium. Ethnicity in international politics.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

VAIL, L. (ed.) 1989. *The creation of tribalism in South Africa.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

CHAPTER 5

Comment on Heribert Adam specifically in the African context

Willie Breytenbach

The stated themes of this project are understood to be 'reconciliation' and 'nation-building'. Reconciliation is seen as a prerequisite for nation-building and for state-building. Reconciliation is also seen as a prerequisite for peaceful transition. The assumption is therefore that reconciliation must take place at the beginning, and not at the end, of the processes of peace, nation and state-building in South Africa. The lessons of similar transitions, in similarly divided societies, serve to support these assumptions.

But in his contribution, Heribert Adam (see Chapter 3) seldom, if ever, uses the concept 'reconciliation'. After having analysed perspectives on the revival of nationalism, explanations for nationalism, the myths and realities of non-racialism, and the question of whether there is a South African nation today, he comes to a negative conclusion by observing a resurgence of ethnicity in South Africa, especially among some of the more peripheralised groups. Yet, South Africa is still far from being absolutely, and deeply, divided. And this he explains in terms of intercommunal economic interdependence.

Adam therefore states that the South African nation has yet to be born (the dominant trend is multiracial; not non-racial) and in these circumstances, he sees possibilities for intergroup compromise also because most South Africans of all races confront each other as equals.

And this perception of equality 'remains an important precondition of successful negotiations and pacting, and perhaps even a minimal sense of common nationhood. Therefore, the chances of a future South African democracy and stability do not falter on incompatible identities, but depend mainly on the promise of greater material equality in a common economy.' Adam's excellent analysis is not conclusive on any of these themes.

My purpose is to explore some African lessons in this context. The African examples of post-revolutionary transition (for example in post-guerrilla-warfare Zimbabwe and Namibia, fought under both nationalist and socialist banners) and post-colonial settlement (for example in the settler society of Kenya) hold instructive lessons for the sequence of reconciliation versus the other processes of nation-building and state-building in an African context. There, reconciliation became state policy after the transfer of power. Before, there was war.

First, the South African situation can hardly be likened either to the post-revolutionary or the post-colonial modes of transition: the total revolutionary transformation of society through armed and political means seemed to be compromised by the major liberation movements as long ago as 1990 when pacting emerged between the state and the challengers; also, the abdication of white power in post-colonial fashion settler domination in Africa has little relevance to the South Africa of the 1990s, except in the field of the transfer of political power. Moreover, this is only one component of state and societal power in post-cold war dispensations.

For in virtually all other fields of societal reconstructions, various degrees of continuity will prevail once apartheid has finally been put to rest.

Second, the accepted mode of transition from apartheid has come to be negotiations (not revolution or decolonisation) where the only way forward seems to be what Adam alludes to as 'pacting', which happens to have been the major feature of the settlement process since the unbanning of the liberation movements and their alliances.

In South Africa pacting has become the essence of the transition, peace- and state-building processes. The spin-offs for nation-building seem to be somewhat incidental.

But in those cases where pacting formed part of transitions elsewhere, they become the vehicles for democratisation of the post-authoritarian state, as happened in Spain and Brazil among others. The point is: pacting is untried and untested in post-revolutionary or post-colonial situations. And since these were the only modes of transition in Africa so far, there are no precedents for pacting.

Seen from an African perspective, the South African transition must therefore be rated as a 'settlement of a special kind' (Nolutshungu 1988). Nolutshungu regards South Africa (1988:479) a 'post-colonial state that made its transition in a distinctive way'. Earlier, Wolpe and others defined South Africa as 'colonialism of a special type'. These distinctive transitions, therefore, warrant special description.

However, closer scrutiny of the most recent examples of the 'second liberation', or 'redemocratisation of Africa' (Decalo 1991) reveal interesting patterns akin to the post-authoritarian trends in southern Europe and Latin America. The African examples that come to mind are the semi-negotiated transformations (mainly through national conferences or similar forums) towards multiparty and democratic rule in Cape Verde, Sao Tomé, Benin, Cameroon and the Ivory Coast (Barry 1993:8).

In these cases important aspects of the transition from one-party authoritarian rule (for example in Cameroon and the Ivory Coast) and even totalitarian rule (for example in Benin) were negotiated between incumbents and challengers. The decisive 'democratic moment' in all these transitions was the holding of democratic elections on the basis of newly agreed to constitutions, after restrictions and all opposition forces had been removed, that is, first through liberalisation, before democratisation set in.

In South Africa, the pacting process (since 1990) has been very similar, except that the timescales are much longer and the process of prior pacting was much more inclusive, including security pacts, interim rule and power-sharing agreements, to be enshrined in the constitutional arrangements (Breytenbach 1993) providing for regional and other safeguards, for example on property rights in a bill of rights.

In Cape Verde, Sao Tomé and Benin the opposition won the elections. In Cameroon and the Ivory Coast the incumbents won the eventual elections. This also happened in Burkina Faso, Ghana and Kenya, where the incumbent regimes played significant roles during the management of the transition processes.

These outcomes do not suggest that Mr Mandela and the ANC will lose the first elections, however. They only show how difficult it is for oppositions in Africa to outvote governments in democratic elections in situations not resembling revolutionary transformation or decolonial transition.

And then, in the final analysis, the pacting process also implies that the transfer of party-political power is the most important, and virtually the only major transformation at stake. In the business sector and even in large components of the bureaucracy continuity will prevail for a long time, since the major compromises entail the retention of a market-driven system augmented by social responsibility policies and institutions for the benefit of the disadvantaged groups in society. This compromise is a fundamental power-sharing feature of pacting and it emphasises mutual trade-offs and safeguards for special interest groups, be they business interests, disadvantaged 'blacks' or ethno-regional entities.

In this way new state structures (forged through compromise) become a prerequisite for reconciliation, and vice versa, as stated earlier. This thesis improves the prospects for a reduction of violence in South Africa (especially right-wing resistance), because violence then becomes a manifestation of uncertainties, low growth, high unemployment and high crime, rather than centrally directed national conflicts between segments of the community. Violence in South Africa is therefore not primarily a case of intercommunal strife, or of politicised ethnicity. Unlike Bosnia or Russia, the South African conflict is not about the accommodation of nationalities, but about regionalism and more material safeguards.

In this scenario, nation-building becomes less relevant. Peace and state reconstruction along democratic lines (taking special interests into account), linked with economic growth, are then the crucial issues. Without growth, democratisation hardly succeeds anywhere (O'Donnell & Schmitter 1986:13).

In this sense, compromises in the pacting tradition are possible, if only for the safeguarding of ethnoregional and material interests as alluded to by Adam. An inclusive settlement along these lines then becomes a prerequisite for reconciliation which comes at the end, and not the beginning, of transformation. The transitions in Kenya, when Kenyatta attended to white fears after the transfer of power; and in Zimbabwe and Namibia, where reconciliation became central aspects of post-transition politics, offer useful examples of the African pattern. In each case reconciliation followed state transformation. South Africa is perhaps not so different. No wonder Adam said very little about reconciliation unless, of course, pacting implies precisely that. But then peace is the prerequisite. Fortunately that fragile process is under way.

REFERENCES

BARRY, Mamadou. 1993. Democratisation in Africa. *Die Suid-Afrikaan*, 43:8.

BREYTENBACH, W. J. 1993. Transitions through pacting: the African experience. *Institute for Futures Research Strategy Insights*, 3(2):1-3.

DECALO, Sam. 1991. Back to square one: the redemocratisation Africa. *Africa Insight*, 21(3):153-161.

NOLUTSHUNGU, Sam. 1988. South Africa and the transfer of power in Africa. In: GIFFORD, P. & LOUIS, W. M. (eds). *Decolonisation and African independence: the transfer of power 1960-1980*. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press.

O'DONNELL, G. & SCHMITTER, P. C. 1986. *Transitions from authoritarian rule: tentative conclusions about uncertain democracies*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press.

CHAPTER 6

Comment on Heribert Adam's viewpoint

Albert Venter

In his essay (see Chapter 3) Adam examines the problem of resurgent ethno-nationalism in the post-Marxist/Leninist world and reflects on its possible impact on nation-building in a post-apartheid South Africa. He rejects two reactions to the resurgence of ethno-nationalism, that is, its explanation as a primordial human trait and its denunciation as a parochial reflex to modernisation. In Adam's view, ethno-nationalism is a reaction to intrusion and discrimination and should be understood in specific historical and social (political, economic, cultural) contexts. In short, according to Adam, ethno-nationalism is not inevitable in ethnically heterogeneous societies: each *historically contingent situation has to be examined either to explain the existence of ethno-nationalism* (my emphasis) or, I assume, to predict its possible appearance.

Adam's essay contains many valuable insights which I will not go into here: for lack of space and because this is a comment immediately following the essay. However, since the essay touches upon the perennial question of the possibility of a relatively peaceful settlement of the South African ethno-nationalist problem, in my opinion some comment on this aspect of the essay is necessary.

Adam's main argument about the South African problem and its settlement is the following: Precisely because of its history of minority domination and extreme racial discrimination, together with an interdependent economy and interspersed population, South Africa is 'well on the way toward eradicating tribalism in favour of common statehood'. The evidence that Adam cites is the following: The main parties (ANC, IFP, NP) promote an inclusive South African nationalism. The exclusivists from right and left — the Conservative Party, Pan-Africanist Congress and the Azanian Peoples Organisation — are relatively insignificant minorities. He finds acceptance by the main players that the institutions of a future South Africa will have to reflect the state's ethnic diversity. And South Africa's people must confront each other as equals. The blacks are not the detribalised slaves of the United States; the whites have no other fatherland; they are not settlers.

Adam admits that there is no South African nation at present but is sanguine about its development in the future. Black and white South Africans will be able to celebrate their common South Africanness, because both groups will benefit from it. Compromise in South Africa is likely because all will be winners. In his view the fundamental cleavages in South Africa do not revolve around race or culture, but around social equity. Rather than ethnicity it is class (jobs, income, property), dare I say, material conditions of life, that matter most to all South Africans. 'The chances of a future South African democracy and stability do not falter on incompatible identities but *depend mainly on the promise of greater material equality in a common economy*' (my emphasis).

Should one accept that there is nothing primordial or inevitable about ethno-nationalism in divided societies, as Adam has so eloquently argued, some of the possible future developments in South Africa's economy should be anticipated. For it is the ability of the economy to deliver 'greater material equality' that will, in Adam's judgement, preclude us from being swept up in a vortex of violent and divisive ethno-nationalism.

This is not an essay on South Africa's political economy and I cannot do a detailed scenario of the economy for, say, the next ten years or so. But some structural features of the national and international political economy in which the conditions for greater material equity will have to be met, will be sketched. By doing so I hope to contribute to the debate on nation-building and ethno-nationalism that Adam has started. My main aim is to anticipate the possible 'situational determinant' of South Africa's ethno-nationalist relations that lie ahead. In Adam's own judgement, it will depend mainly on the promise of greater material equality in a common economy. Here I am in almost total agreement with Adam: human beings at their most basic are material creatures. The more fundamental and pervasive influences of most of, if not all, human lives are economic. More can be inferred about a person's quality of life from information on wealth and income than from almost any other single factor. The single most important element leading to unacceptable conditions of life is the lack of income or wealth. Should one accept this thesis, some comments on South Africa's political economy are called for.

COMMENTS ON THE CONCEPT OF A 'FREE MARKET POLITICAL ECONOMY'*

The quintessential free market economy is one in which private ownership is paramount, profit is the primary yardstick of economic success and markets are open to all producers and products. Miminum state intervention in the economy goes hand in hand with its role as protector of the internal and external security of its citizens and of the value of the currency. Control over production and distribution is outside the province of the state and the invisible hand of the market mechanism is sole efficient regulator of the political economy of society. Some collective ownership is accepted as unavoidable, but this is restricted to economic infrastructure that is created to serve the general interest. Examples are roads, sea- and airports, the security infrastructure: arms, military bases, and public education.

The system functions in terms of greed, selfishness, avarice and covetousness. These basic human instincts may be camouflaged by mythologising and legitimising capitalist entrepreneurship, self-made men, rational interest of the individual, economic efficiency and the like. The central normative commitment is the profit motive, and as long as the enterprise is legal, more or less anything goes. The ideal free market society is one of minimum laws that will leave the individual and firm unfettered in the pursuit of profit. The normative commitment is essentially amoral and suppresses (and sometimes even ignores) the effects of economic activity on society and the individual. The collectivity (society), and its representative in the form of the state, is assumed to be an adversary rather than a partner.

There can be little question that to the greatest extent the business community of South Africa supports these essential tenets of the free market. They can be hidden under social responsibility programmes, but the core is supported. A commitment to an unfettered free market is likely to be the cause of major social conflict in a democratic South Africa after apartheid. Conceivably it will manifest itself in terms of racial and ethnic conflict. It is no secret that the gap between white and black wealth in South Africa is one of the most inequitable in the world. The Gini coefficient in South Africa moves along an index of about 0,68, compared with a Gini of about 0,4/0,45 for developed Western societies. Even comparable societies such as those of Brazil and Mexico have Ginis of about 0,53. The redress of this inequality will be the major challenge of a democratic South Africa in the next fifty-odd years.

---

* I thank Professor Eugene Meehan for his valuable insights which he has allowed me to use in this section.

Economic miracles like those of the 'Pacific Dragons' will probably not be emulated in South Africa. The newly industrialised Asian states continue to be supercompetitive, their industrial labour costs are considerably lower on an average hourly rate, and the unions are less demanding and more docile than those in South Africa. On top of this, the Asian labour force is better trained than the South African labour force (cf. Lupton 1992).

EGALITARIAN ECONOMIC POLICIES

Research into stable democracies suggests that the major source of instability is economic inequality. Democracies are not stabilised by sustained economic growth as such — the favourite thesis of libertarian free market apologists. Muller (1988:64-65) has found that: 'All democracies with high income inequality were unstable. These very inegalitarian democracies were highly susceptible to military coups. By contrast, slightly more than two thirds of the democracies with an intermediate level of inequality maintained stability, and all of those with relatively low inequality were stable.'

This finding confirms one of the basic failures of a capitalist market economy: it is a highly efficient system for allocating scarce resources to production and provides a market-clearing mechanism for the products and the inputs to the process, such as labour. Efficiency is devoid of a normative concern (particularly that of equity) and it ignores the effects this efficiency has on the people concerned. In the name of efficiency machines can replace people and if this means redundancy — so be it. The people will have to fend for themselves. Surely a recipe for social conflict.

THE STRUCTURE OF SOUTH AFRICAN CAPITAL

Through the years the structure of South African capitalism has followed the broad developments of international capital. The most salient points are the following: Corporate management has been professionalised with a concomitant professionalisation of political management. For instance, the professional politicians of the United States Senate have a lower turnover than the House of Lords in the United Kingdom. This means that control over the resources of capitalist societies has become the province of an interchangeable professional elite. The business of government has become the business of business. Power has been concentrated in the hands of the few. In South Africa it would technically be possible to identify no more than 400 white members of the South African business and government èlite who effectively control well over 80 per cent of the economy as a whole. This concentration, together with the expansion of communications capacities, has increased the ability of South African capital owners to influence events to suit their purposes. Witness the concentration of ownership and control of the mass media in the hands of four large press groups and the government-controlled South African Broadcasting Corporation.

Capital has become extremely mobile, to such an extent that South Africa can, and has been, threatened by local and overseas capital. This threat was effectively carried out in the so-called debt standstill since 1986. The same threat is being used against the nationalisation policies of the African National Congress and will most likely be used against any successor government in a democratic South Africa. But it goes further than this. The mobility of capital is likely to be a threat against the workers of South Africa as well: should they 'price themselves out of the market', the threat would be that international and local capital will take their investments to more profitable societies, for instance in the Pacific Rim states. As things stand at the moment, South African labour costs compare unfavourably with those in the Pacific Rim which has better technically trained and, at present, more docile workers. For instance average industrial labour costs in South Africa are $2-3 per hour as compared with $1,20 per hour in Taiwan.

It is clear that the egalitarian political economy that is needed to stabilise a future democratic South Africa will be fundamentally at odds with the tenets of a free market economy. There is a cardinal contradiction between the needs of unfettered profit-driven private enterprise and the need to improve the conditions of life of the poorer members of South African society. Business and economic leaders are sure to put pressure on any future South African government for minimal regulation and maximum profits. Moreover, the international context of capitalism is such that the threat of divestment from the South African economy will be ever present. Currently there is no coherent international agency to regulate world economic affairs. More than the international political system, the international economic system is a Hobbesian *Homo homini lupus*. South Africa is heavily dependent on international trade (about 60 per cent of GDP) and foreign investment, and its over-reliance on gold as a foreign exchange earner (about 45-50 per cent of total export sales) makes it vulnerable to foreign economic pressure and to the general state of the world economy.

The type of economic system that present-day free marketeers strive for: one of maximal competition and minimal state intervention can only have deleterious and nefarious side effects on the South African political economy. The 'buy low, sell high' dictum that is the organising metaphor of the free market ultimately and logically must lead either to a clamour for monopolistic protection or to product degradation. In South Africa business already receives ample protection from the government. The side effects of monopolism on the South African population would be that present inequalities will be continued and that the major issue and conflict in South Africa will be a resource-based one clad in racial and colour terms. This would not augur well for the future, particularly for nation-building.

THE INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT

In the international context the new South African government will find itself in a decidedly capitalist-dominated environment in which the national economy will be under pressure. The role of multinational capital will put the economic inadequacies of the state into stark focus. Should the South African government become unable to provide the two most basic functions of a state-differential treatment of its citizens against the outside world and internal protection it will be seriously weakened. For there would be no reason to expect the continued allegiance of its citizens to an institution that fails them — in the same way that the present (1993) National Party government has failed the majority of its citizens. In addition, the economically most powerful group in the country (the whites and their class allies among the other race groups) would threaten either to leave or to take over the state by force.

Moreover, the present structural adjustment programmes of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, if followed in South Africa, will force a future South African government to keep to fairly strict free market monetary and fiscal policies. Failing this, little international aid will flow to South Africa. It is also clear that the *deus ex machina* of wealthy Japanese investors or conscience-stricken American and European philanthropic foundations will not be economic saviours for the poorer South Africans. Thus the future South African government will not have many economic options outside a free market-oriented economy.

Finally, the free market political economy model stems from the antecedents of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century political philosophies, which operated in a context totally different from the present world economic system. In the modern world the argument for minimal government is well suited to the needs of the affluent and the powerful. And given the contradictions of the basis of the free market system (buying low and selling high), this is well suited to those who want to pursue private enterprise to its limits. But this will not solve South Africa's most pressing problem: the equalisation of the material life of all its citizens.

DEFENSIBLE ROLE FOR THE STATE

What is needed for a solution to South Africa's dilemma in its political economy is a defensible role for the capacity of a modern state. The state and its personnel should be required to justify its commitments on normative and empirical grounds. The population at large will have to be educated to become an informed and critical body of citizens capable of knowledgeable judgement in order to assess and criticise the actions of their government. The central normative commitment of any new South African government of necessity would have to be to improve the quality of life of all its citizens, using the equal value of human life as its central normative point of departure.

In this respect there seems to be a problem with the extraparliamentary opposition on the left. The ANC, for example, still holds very strong views on a centralised and powerful state, one that will be tempted to follow the now outdated nineteenth-century concept of the mono-state: control over the population in terms of the culture to be followed, the languages spoken, the homogenisation of museums, history books, national myths, sports bodies, monuments, and so on. There is much thinking in the ANC that, in my judgement, still holds that the state should monopolise civil society. Now this may be pre-election rhetoric, but it is a distinct danger. The ANC is ambiguous on the role and function of regions as well as on recognising the diversity of South African society — for fear of letting private apartheid and neo-apartheid in through the back door through the ruse of pluralism. In my judgement, we do not need a unilinear centralised state which will enforce its own conception of society on everyone. We need to accommodate diversity.

The capacities of the state and the parastatal enterprises in South Africa are enormous and have no rival in Africa. If these resources were kept under responsible public control — a form of control that would reflect the general socioeconomic needs of South Africa's mostly poor population — enormous advantages would flow to the disadvantaged over time. Accepting the hypothesis that egalitarian policies would in general benefit all South Africans by stabilising its new democratic institutions, ignoring the capacities of the present South African parastatal system would amount to criminal negligence. There is no automatic benefit from privatising these enterprises: the above arguments about the so-called free market and its supposed benefits tried to illustrate that. Little argument or evidence is produced by antiparastatal advocates in South Africa to prove that the major parastatals are economically ineffective. There is no reason in principle why a monitoring system cannot be set up in which the efficiency of the parastatals could be continuously monitored. Instead of privatising these enterprises, the money could be invested in *new* productive economic projects to benefit all South Africans — especially the poorer black section — in order to facilitate greater economic egalitarianism.

This argument does not mean that an economy can be centrally planned and directed. This is a logical and epistemological impossibility. My argument is simply that South Africa's so-called 'public sector' has an enormous capacity to improve the lives of its (mainly) black impoverished citizens. Given the level of political debate in the present circumstances in South Africa, there is much to be pessimistic about. However, the human and material resources in the country need to be utilised in an informed and considered manner. To do otherwise would be to invite a political disaster of the first magnitude.

CONCLUSION

If we accept Adam's thesis that nation-building and non-racialism are possible in South Africa, depending on specific felicitous material circumstances, the debate should focus on restructuring the conditions of material distribution in South Africa. I have argued that predominantly free market economic policies would exacerbate the conflict. They would create material conditions of inequality unsuitable for racial conflict regulation. My point is simply this: the normative commitment of any South African political economy cannot be unfettered free marketism. It has to be a commitment towards reducing economic inequality. In my judgement, this will create the conditions of greater material equality emphasised by Adam and lead to the expected democratic stability. If the economy cannot deliver the material wherewithal to society, the alternative will not bear contemplation.

REFERENCES

LUPTON, M. 1992. Economic crisis, deracialisation and spatial restructuring: challenges for radical geography. In: ROGERSON, C. & McCARTHY, J. *Geography in a changing South Africa.* Cape Town: Oxford University Press.

MULLER, Edward N. 1988. Democracy, economic development and income inequality. *American Sociological Review.* February:64-65.

CHAPTER 7

Reply to comments by Breytenbach, Filatova and Venter

Heribert Adam

All three comments can be considered valuable supplements rather than contradictory arguments to my analysis. They emphasise different aspects, highlight unresolved predicaments and rightly caution about too optimistic a conclusion in a fluid situation. Like me, none of the three commentators is an advocate of unitary nation-building in South Africa. Instead they stress the value of cultural pluralism, territorial federalism and controversial compromises in the light of disastrous experiences elsewhere.

Willie Breytenbach (see Chapter 5) draws attention to my inconclusiveness about 'reconciliation' as a prerequisite for nation-building. Indeed, trust and reconciliation remain the hopeful outcome of working together in legitimate state institutions rather than being a precondition for their establishment. One could even go further and argue that a healthy dose of distrust between real antagonists serves the historic compromise better than the prior assumption of false harmony. Democratic state-building is not about love and trust, but about adherence to mutually binding rules that regulate conflicting interests. As Breytenbach well recognises, it is too early to state with any confidence whether the institutions of the new state to be born will also lead to a new political culture of reconciliation.

Most certainly political conflict let alone history will not end with the new order that will be as rigorously contested as the old one. The difference lies in the means of the contest: words instead of bullets, persuasion instead of repression, should it work out. Most likely, the power-sharing arrangement will be a competitive coalition, rather than a co-operative one. One side will blame the other for the inevitable failures and disappointments. Whether the new regime can bear these strains without giving in to the temptation of ethnic mobilisation remains to be seen. The fact that the ANC in government needs the expertise and loyalty of the white bureaucracy and security machinery, and the NP needs the support of at least some blacks to remain a creditable counterbalance should guard against a fall back into racial competition. Breytenbach cites a variety of examples of African states in transition. However, it seems doubtful that these non-industrialised states with their totally different economic, political and social conditions can serve as a guide for the developments in South Africa.

Similar reservations apply to the lessons from the former Soviet Union which Irina Filatova (see Chapter 4) invokes for a rather gloomy forecast. Without claiming any special expertise in the complex in-fighting following the demise of the last colonial metropole in Moscow, the examples cited do not support the primordial notion of ethnicity, so common among Soviet academics but fortunately not shared by Filatova. If ethnicity were an intrinsic primordial phenomenon then the large Russian minorities outside Russia would rather have sided with 'mother Russia' in the battle over the independence of successor states. Instead, Filatova points to the remarkable redefinition of ethnic loyalties among diaspora Russians, just as National Party supporters redefined their interest and racial exclusiveness after apartheid became dysfunctional: 'Without the support of ethnic minorities in the republics, their independence from Moscow would never have been won ... In Ukraine Kazakhstan with their huge Russian population (in some regions the majority), independence could never have been proclaimed, or worked, if the minorities had not supported it.' If the primordial sociobiologists are right, the genetic-ethnic bond between Russians everywhere would have overridden such new loyalties. Likewise, Afrikaners would have never divorced themselves from their brown offspring and instead favoured non-related Europeans as members of the political ingroup. How do primordialists explain that right-wing Afrikaners get into bed with like-minded Zulu nationalists against their fellow Afrikaner government accused of betrayal? Indeed, the hope for South Africa lies in this cross-racial political expediency overriding racial or ethnic bonds in all camps.

All three commentators do not share the unfortunate South African academic taboo of silence on ethnicity, because the apartheid state had manipulated and politicised cultural identity. The left particularly has had to confront the issue of nationalist revival squarely and honestly. This is still painful for most left-oriented academics because the formerly socialist states are the worst offenders.

As Filatova forcefully points out, one should not deny the co-existence of chauvinism, racism, anti-Semitism and suppressed nationalism together with the official internationalist doctrine of Marxism in the 'really existing' bureaucratic socialism of the former Soviet Union. But that does not make the two compatible at the level of ideology. In theory at least, Marxism shares the most universalist vision with the great world religions. When a communist party in power promotes ethnic chauvinism (as many did and still do — see for example Milosevic in Belgrade) it makes a mockery of its doctrinal heritage. This situation is akin to turning the Vatican into a brothel, which also happened at one time. However, such aberrations are open to corrections with better political education, precisely because communist or Catholic indoctrination has to live with an obvious contradiction and the sinful practice is therefore vulnerable to critique.

As far as South Africa is concerned, Filatova recognises the internationalist record of the SACP by commenting: 'I am not sure that in the new future it will be communists to whom South Africa's minorities may appeal for reason and restraint.' If this most astute observation is correct, then white South Africa should welcome the strength of the communist influence in the ANC rather than fear it; it should have a vested interest in having the SACP at the centre of the alliance rather than having the SACP marginalised and the alliance split up and its counterracist nationalists promoted, as the National Party strategists pursued sometime ago. The shameful Stalinist record of the SACP notwithstanding, once the SACP as the guarantor of non-racialism loses out, black and white extremists can truly face each other on the battlefield.

A strong and sophisticated left force is also needed for the reason of a more egalitarian economy as a prerequisite of stability that Albert Venter (see Chapter 6) rightly stresses. Despite his seeming departure from the symbolic realm of nation-building to economic issues, Venter lays his finger on the crucial question of the future of the South African state: Since an unfettered free market economy does not lead to greater equality — 'the major issue and conflict in South Africa will be a resource based one clad in racial and colour terms'. One may well forget about a minimal sense of nation-building under these circumstances. Clearly, affirmative action cannot 'be limited to the sphere of national symbols' as Filatova falsely ascribes to my analysis. I fully agree with Venter's warning about the disastrous consequences of privatising the parastatals at this unclear stage and weakening the capacity of the public sector to reduce material inequality. Indeed, the logic of capitalism necessitates private profit-making — notwithstanding the social responsibility programmes, the corporate charity and the human intentions of individual business executives.

It is in the delicate balance and subtle management of these divergent interests, not in the emotionalism about flags and anthems or appeals to ethnic roots that the future of the South African nation will be ultimately decided. Here the record so far allows for guarded optimism, despite the widespread violence and sense of doom.

The most likely rationale and also the most likely scenario for South Africa is a social-democratic pact between business, labour, and key state bureaucracies, as practised in postwar Germany. The pact would involve genuine co-determination in the private sector and negotiated wage constraints and limited price increases in order to make South Africa competitive in the world market and raise productivity. In return for the state's extended social investments in education, health and housing, unions would abandon adversarial labour relations and class warfare. Labour and business would see themselves more as partners in rebuilding a new nation, not as adversaries engaging in regular trials of strength through strikes and mass action.

This scenario does not presuppose high employment and high levels of welfare in order to work. An affluent economy with high social wages and stable industrial relations is the goal, not the precondition, of the social democratic vision. Indeed, the much romanticised Swedish model was introduced in the 1920s, when Swedish economic development was approximately at the level of current South African development. Codetermination and industrial partnership in Germany came about after the complete destruction of the economic base. Nor does social democracy occur without intense political struggles. Social democracy does not promise industrial harmony, merely the minimisation of conflict through sensible labour relations and rules of bargaining from which all sides benefit. Since the legalisation of trade unions in the 1970s and mutually acceptable rules for settling labour disputes in the 1980s, South Africa has made considerable progress toward industrial democracy, an arbitration system, a labour court, and workplace jurisprudence, long before political democracy appeared on the horizon. Yet the concept of a social pact is still interpreted quite differently by capital and labour. Business attempts to buy labour peace and productivity through some paternalistic largesse on the shopfloor, and unions view arbitration and bargaining as a prelude to higher forms of class warfare.

Unlike Europe and industrial democracies elsewhere, South Africa granted union rights before granting the political franchise. The ensuing struggle for political rights through industrial action has created one of the most militant union movements in the world. Its leaders are deeply suspicious of co-optation by capital and favour independent workers' control.

Another problem in reaching a social compact in South Africa remains in the scepticism of management toward union representatives as full decision-makers from the shopfloor to the boardroom, lest their participation be seen as management's abdication of responsibility on the slippery road to socialism. Unions, in turn, dismiss the transformative capacity of industrial democracy as manipulative co-optation, and they are so steeped in notions of class struggle that financial participation schemes are viewed as fostering an alternative ideology. But, in time, the unions are likely to see the advantages of workers' participation, including shared responsibility for quality and productivity in return for veto rights over managerial decisions. Successful political negotiations may also pave the way for alternative perceptions in industrial relations, as does the fledgling 'Economic Forum', promoted by farsighted forces in all three camps.

With such remarkable pragmatic rationality on both sides of the continuing ideological disagreement, there is no reason for South Africa to fail in the quest for reluctant reconciliation. If a highly politicised and better-organised labour movement can lead the way to stability and rationality, suspicious competing political leaders will have to fall in line.

In this process of forging cautious co-operation, many a utopian dream will be disappointed, particularly on the Left, but also among hardline advocates of an unfettered free market. Their capitalist vision nonetheless will survive in a modified form. The socialists will have to sacrifice most of their dreams because they have the least real power despite the mass sympathy for radical restructuring.

CHAPTER 8

A neglected dimension of nation-building in South Africa: the ethnic factor

Kierin O'Malley

There can be little doubt that one of the most crucial dimensions of nation-building and state-building and of intercommunal or inter-ethnic reconciliation in multi-ethnic states such as South Africa is the ethnic dimension. The idea and project of nation-building after all presupposes the existence within a given territorial unit of distinct ethnic communities who allegedly need to be built into a more cohesive and directed social formation, namely the nation.

It is the core contention of this contribution that this ethnic dimension has been neglected — certainly underplayed — in the transition process to the 'New South Africa'. Unless this ethnic dimension is both recognised and accommodated — including recognition and accommodation at a political/constitutional level — in the new political dispensation, the 'New South Africa' will experience neither nation-building, nor intercommunal reconciliation, nor state-building. The 'New South Africa' will also in all likelihood continue to experience the horrific levels of violence that currently exist. There can be little doubt that the fear of ethnic minority communities (both black and white) — given the anti-ethnic, majoritarian populism that is currently the dominant political trend this fear is by no means far-fetched — of their political and economic marginalisation and emasculation is a major, and amazingly underemphasised, cause of this country's violence and brewing civil war.

And for the recognition and accommodation of the ethnic factor to occur, South African intellectuals and academics are going to have to be far more willing than the vast majority of us currently appear to be, to challenge populist political and intellectual dogma about the ethnic factor. A large number of South African intellectuals and academics appear to have succumbed uncritically to the new populist political paradigm with its superficially non-racial, anti-ethnic perspective. This phenomenon is not unlike the uncritical attitude that many Afrikaans-speaking academics and intellectuals took within the apartheid paradigm during the 1950s and 1960s and the strange thing is that many Afrikaans-speaking South African 'intellectuals' are part of the latest version of populist, political intellectualism in this country. A number of former Afrikaner nationalists have apparently been able to become African nationalists without as much as a backward glance.

The fuzzy notion of 'non-racialism' — which has become part of the political lexicon of all political players in South Africa bar those to the right of the National Party (the Cosag grouping and the new Afrikaner Front) — has played and continues to play a major role in the denial of the ethnic dimension of South African society and politics. The concept — which was first used by the Communist Party of South Africa in the 1920s and later introduced by the CPSA and other white radicals to the black nationalist politics of the African National Congress (ANC) in the late 1940s early 1950s — is therefore dangerous and, unless more clearly delineated, needs to be exorcised from the country's political lexicon.

NATION-BUILDING

Two important introductory conceptual points also need to be made: First, that the 'processes' of nation-building and state-building need to be conceptually and practically kept separate from one another as attempts at state-building (particularly in the multi-ethnic Third World) have more often than not involved what Walker Connor (1972) termed nation-destroying the antithesis of nation-building. In other words, a majority ethnic community has often captured the state within multi-ethnic societies and proceeded to use the power of the state to politically and economically enhance the position of its own ethnic community to the detriment of, and often outright discrimination against, various ethnic minorities. This is essentially what the phenomenon of 'nation-building' and not only in its one-party state format entailed in the 30 years of independence in the vast majority of African states.

The crucial distinction between nation-building and state-building is alluded to by Hanf (1989:97) when he states: 'Whereas Jacobinism seeks nations for existing States, ethnic nationalism seeks States.' The same author describes Jacobinism as 'Europe's leading political export, usually sold as "nation-building" to the Third World' (Hanf 1989:97). Otto Pflanze's well-known distinction between state-nation and nation-state alludes to the same dichotomy identified by Hanf. The fact of the matter is that the existence of a nation is a prerequisite for successful state-building defined as an improvement in a state's order, extractive/productive and distributive functions.

The second conceptual point that needs to be made is that the very notion of 'nation-building' not only reflects the acceptance of a paradigm of large-scale social engineering, but that an increasing number of scholars interested in the phenomena of ethnicity, nationalism and state/ethnic relations in multi-ethnic societies are coming to the conclusion that the dangers of top/down or Jacobin and especially populist driven modes of nation-building very often have greater destructive than positive implications.

In a recent perceptive paper, the Israeli Africanist Motty Tamarkin makes the interesting point that while the vast majority of African states no longer operate within a nation-building paradigm — having recognised (however belatedly) the notion's intrinsically anti-pluralist and centralist implications — the nation-building paradigm enjoys continued popularity in southern Africa and in particular in Namibia and South Africa (1992). The emphasis that much of the leading current literature on, what are termed, state/ethnic relations in the generally multi-ethnic states of the Third World, places on notions of ethnic accommodation and ethnic self-determination is itself implicit recognition of the dangers and destructive potential intrinsic to top-down/Jacobin modes of nation-building (Rothchild & Olorunsola 1983, Montville 1990 & Ra'anan *et al.* 1991).

In a study of intra-state communal conflict in 32 states Hanf found that 'most cases of violent conflict are characterised by struggles between Jacobins and ethnic nationalists rather than between competing communalisms' (1989:98). In addition to the revolutionary, voluntaristic Jacobin mode of nation-building (defined as the eradication of all extant cultural and ethnic sentiment and their replacement by a new unified and culturally uniform 'nation'), Hanf (1989:97) identifies two additional modes of nation-building, that is, nation-building via ethnic nationalism and nation-building via syncretistic nationalism. The latter in particular is a far more plural and liberal mode of nation-building, as it does not attempt to build a new nation from scratch but accepts extant ethnic and cultural communities as equal building blocks of a new 'nation'.

Hanf's distinction between Jacobin and syncretistic nationalism or Jacobin nation-building and syncretistic nation-building is akin to Neuberger's (1986:13) useful distinction between liberal- democratic and nationalist approaches to self-determination in Africa. Giliomee and Schlemmer (1989:121) describe the former as revolving around 'respect for basic human rights, protection of minorities, equality for all individuals and groups ....' and emphasise the collectivist-dimensions of the latter which perceive national self-determination as having been fulfilled 'as long as the citizens of the nation are ruled by their "kith and kin"'.

Even if one accepts the notion that nations can be built and that itself is a decidedly problematic and often glib assumption the fact remains that someone or some entity must direct the process of nation-building. As Ernest Gellner (1964) wrote almost 30 years ago, it is nationalism and specifically the so-called cultural entrepreneurs who are central to the articulation of a nationalist ideology that invents nations and not nations that invent nationalism. The so-called 'modernist' theories which run from Gellner through to modern scholars such as Breuilly, Nairn, Kedourie and Anderson generally do tend to underplay the 'fixed'/primordial biological dimension of ethnicity and thus also of nationalism and to exaggerate the scope within which cultural entrepreneurs operate.

In fact, for a number of these scholars the cultural entrepreneur has simply replaced the bourgeois, commercial entrepreneur of early Marxist and neo-Marxist perspectives as the prime manipulator and 'creator' of ethnic and national phenomenon. Even though the role of the so-called cultural entrepreneurs is exaggerated by modernists, they obviously do play a major role in the 'building' of national myths and nations. The idea that 'nation-building' is thus an impersonal, apolitical and intrinsically inclusive process or phenomenon is ahistorical and potentially very dangerous. This point is scarcely heard in what passes for national 'debate' in the transitional South Africa.

WHAT/WHO IS THE SOUTH AFRICAN NATION?

The crucial question is then, who is precisely the nation, who is the 'self' in national self-determination — and in our case who or what is the nation of the 'New South Africa'? Scholars such as Slabbert (1992), Adam and Moodley (1986; 1993) and Hanf (1989) have all argued to varying degrees that a liberal-democratic, syncretistic, inclusive and pluralist approach to national self-determination/nation-building in South Africa is dominant among the major political players and specifically the ANC. Giliomee (1989a; 1989b) has been the most consistent opponent of this view and has provided far more convincing empirical data to back up his claim that the 'struggle' for self-determination and 'liberation' in South Africa by the ANC is intrinsically nationalist and less pluralist and inclusive and potentially far more Jacobin than many observers appear to believe.

In a recent article (1992:541), Giliomee has again emphasised the strong anticolonial and nationalist paradigm within which the 'struggle' even during the phase of constitutional negotiations has been conducted. The ANC's continued use of the dated notion of nation-building reflects the colonial framework within which, to a large degree, the movement continues to operate. The idea that there are settlers and indigenous peoples in South Africa is not one limited to the Pan-Africanist Congress and other organisations of the so-called ultraleft. The continued existence, after 42 months, of negotiated transition of different views both academic and political as to what will constitute the new South African nation, reflects the fact that the Horowitzian metaconflict has yet to be addressed, let alone resolved.

There are political actors (the two most important being the ANC and the PAC) and left and left-liberal academics who view the South African conflict as essentially a colonial one between a settler ruling class and the indigenous oppressed. There are also political actors (the DP, NP and members of the Cosag grouping) — albeit to varying public degrees — and liberal and conservative scholars, who view the South African conflict essentially as a non-colonial, communal one in which distinct ethnic communities with equally defensible demands and interests operate.

IGNORING THE ETHNIC PHENOMENON IN SOUTH AFRICA

For a wide range of very different reasons the ethnic dimension of South African society and politics is being consistently underplayed — and at times even totally ignored — by most of the country's major political players and by a wide range of the intellectual elite. Ethnicity has become a dirty word — a fact even reflected in the choice of title for this conference — namely nation/state-building and intercommunal reconciliation in South Africa. To what does intercommunal refer but the ethnic divisions that exist within South Africa? The intellectual and political reasons for the neglect of the ethnic factor, at both intellectual and political levels in South Africa, include:

- the widespread but simplistic and false equation of apartheid and ethnicity — with its rider that an ethnic perspective on South African society and its politics is incompatible with a commitment to a post-apartheid 'New South Africa'. (The South African neo-Marxist intellectual left is primarily responsible for this dogma, although it has not paid nearly as much attention to the relationship between apartheid and ethnicity as it has to the relationship between capitalism and apartheid.) It is no coincidence that it has largely been foreign scholars who have been most explicit about this country's neglect of the ethnic factor at both intellectual and political levels (Horowitz 1991) and of the dangers of a populist/Jacobin mode of 'nation-building' (Tamarkin 1992 & Hanf 1989);
- the general difficulty that Western civilisation and the social sciences in general have in recognising and dealing with the issues of race and ethnicity. Horowitz (1991:29) refers to Western scholarship's 'bias against ethnicity (which) runs deep' and attributes this bias to a pervasive intellectual bias against ascriptive social phenomenon and 'to the growth of materialist explanations for social phenomenon'. The political and intellectual aversion to recognising the ethnic factor is thus not a uniquely South African characteristic, although the intellectual and political hegemony that is currently enjoyed by the broad left in South Africa

has undoubtedly furthered the marginalisation of the ethnic factor at an intellectual and political level, but not at the social one;

- the fact that the only political actors in the transitional South Africa who articulate an essentially ethnic perspective — albeit partial and in the case of specific elements within the recently formed Afrikaner Volksfront tinged with racism — are Cosag and the Afrikaner Volksfront;
- the difficulty that liberalism as an ideology or supra-ideology (which emphasises individualism and self-determination) has in dealing with 'collective' and ascriptive social phenomena and affiliations such as ethnicity (the same reason accounts for the theoretical difficulty that liberalism experiences with various kinds of nationalism);
- the intellectual hegemony that a broad neo-Marxism or Marxist-inspired populism enjoys in South Africa. The difficulty that such intellectual perspectives have with ethnic and national phenomena (the so-called 'national question') is well known and often translates — as it does in South Africa — into the neglect of these phenomena and a corresponding emphasis on building a 'new' nation. In a recent lecture on 'affirmative action: the international experience' Myron Weiner *inter alia* writes that 'the socialist countries created a myth, that socialism knew how to deal with ethnic disparities and ethnic conflict'.

In his incisive (but unfortunately little read) 1991 book on South Africa *A democratic South Africa? Constitutional engineering in a divided society* the American Donald Horowitz — author of arguably what is to date the most penetrating and wide-ranging work on ethnic conflict in the Third World described what he termed 'the studied neglect of ethnicity that characterizes current discourse in South Africa' (1991:28). Horowitz was writing specifically about the near absence of academic research and writing on the issue, but also analysed the perspectives on ethnicity of the major political formations and organisations. As regards the latter, Horowitz's assessment of the charterist anti-ethnic interpretation of 'non-racialism' is particularly useful.

It was unfortunate that discussion and reference — both at intellectual and more popular levels — to Horowitz's book on South Africa were generally limited to his discussion of various constitutional and electoral mechanisms (for example vote-pooling) which could help mediate and accommodate potential — especially ethnic — conflict. (See for example a review of the book by DP MP Tony Leon in the *Weekly Mail*, 23-29 August 1991.) But the American's consideration of these structural questions was premised by his description of South Africa as 'a racially and ethnically divided society' which, in addition, 'is polarized along ideological lines within and across ethnic groups' (Horowitz 1991:xii). This is crucial, because Horowitz argued — and I think correctly — that this dimension of the South African social reality was not only being contested, but was being largely neglected and in danger of becoming totally marginalised. In my view Horowitz's prescient warning has turned out to be tragically true.

That a book titled *Critical choices for South Africa: an agenda for the 1990s* contains no chapter on the ethnic factor illustrates this point as does the fact that a recent book by Frederik Van Zyl Slabbert (1992), one of South Africa's leading liberal intellectuals, scarcely mentions the ethnic dimension in South Africa's 'Quest for democracy'. Slabbert co-authored the first book on the politics of negotiations in South Africa more than a decade ago and in it had referred to 'the intensity of (South Africa's) racial and ethnic antagonisms' (1979:10) and to the need for political power-sharing in a deeply divided society. The acceptable political *lingua franca* of the 1990s has clearly changed, as has the explicit recognition and articulation of the ethnic dimension.

THE HOROWITZIAN METACONFLICT

Another of Horowitz's incisive and again largely neglected comments on South African society as it entered the transitional phase, was what he termed 'the existence of the conflict and a metaconflict' — a conflict about the conflict — in South Africa (1991:2). The former is the result of competition between rival political, economic or cultural interests. It is largely a political conflict in the wide sense of the term. The metaconflict on the other hand is a conflict and essentially an intellectual one as to what the primary sources of these first-order conflicts and divisions are. Are they essentially class/economic or are they essentially derived from ethnic and national considerations? Horowitz (1991:3-9) identifies twelve marginally different views among South Africans on the metaconflict (he subsequently reduces them to four), but his crucial point is that South Africa at the beginning of the 1990s was a doubly deeply divided society in the sense that there was the conflict and the conflict about the conflict. The point I wish to make three years after the publication of the American's book is that a resolution of the Horowitzian metaconflict in South Africa has yet to occur. Some political players continue to see the conflict as essentially an ethnic or national one while others see it through materialist lenses as a class/economic one. The result is that the transitional process in South Africa and specifically the constitutional negotiations themselves have to date occurred within 'a normative vacuum'.

ETHNIC REALISM IN SOUTH AFRICA

Since the appearance of Horowitz's book — the major part of which was written in 1990 — a number of developments at intellectual and political levels concerning the ethnic phenomena (to use the title of Pierre van den Berghe's 1981 'sociobiological' work on ethnicity) do deserve attention, however. These include political shifts *vis-à-vis* the ethnic phenomena within the African National Congress and the governing National Party — the two major political formations — and the beginnings of intellectual reawakening over the ethnic phenomena.

At a political level the African National Congress has marginally toned down its anti-ethnic bias. Although it has by no stretch of the imagination reached a position of what can be called ethnic realism (defined as a position which recognises the ethnic or deeply divided nature of South-African politics — including political/constitutional recognition. It recognises that ethnicity is not a totally negative social phenomena but is, as Horowitz has described it, 'community-building in moderation'), the ANC's position on the ethnic phenomena has undergone a partial process of liberalisation in the 42 months of transition politics since February 1990. The ANC's initial unqualified hostility to the ethnic phenomena reflected, for example, in the clause in its 1989 constitutional guidelines which provided for the banning of political parties which had specific ethnic or regional basis — has been partially removed. This clause (reminiscent of a provision which Nkrumah used to establish a one-party state in Ghana in the early 1960s) has been deleted from the ANC's latest constitutional proposals.

The impression that the ANC has shifted markedly from its strong anti-ethnic perspective at the assumption of the transition process has been aided by a far greater emphasis that the movement now (that is, in the first half of 1993) places on protecting and nurturing the diverse languages and cultures that exist in South Africa. The ANC's policy guidelines adopted at its National Conference in mid-1992, for example, state *inter alia* that 'the right of all South Africans to practise their religions, uphold their cultures and speak languages of their choice should be promoted and protected'. But this can be termed tolerance of private ethnicity. Ethnic and cultural diversity, in the ANC's view, are not to enter the public realm and certainly are not to be accorded political recognition in a future constitutional dispensation. The policy guidelines are explicit on this point — 'The ANC opposes the entrenchment of race and ethnic group rights in the constitution ...'

The only exception that the ANC makes to its principled opposition to politically, publically and constitutionally recognising the ethnic factor is of course its commitment to affirmative action programmes in the new dispensation. The ANC's acceptance of regional government in the interim and final constitutions (especially as it is a qualified regionalism within a unitary state) also does not constitute the accommodation of ethnicity, especially of ethnic minority concerns and demands. It is interesting to note that the ANC's regional proposals essentially make provision for ethnic regions or homelands for the major black ethnic groups, but not for geographically more dispersed ethnic minority communities such as the coloureds, Indians and whites. It needs to be emphasised that regionalism *per se* cannot achieve ethnic accommodation in a multi-ethnic state in which the various ethnic communities are geographically interspersed.

The point that needs to be emphasised, however, is that in spite of its recent stronger public commitment to respecting and promoting ethnic and cultural diversity, the ANC's baulks at what it terms 'politicising' or 'constitutionalising' ethnicity. This is seen to contradict the organisation's commitment to 'non-racialism' — a concept which appears throughout the latest policy guidelines but which is left completely undefined. The fact of the matter is that cultural and ethnic groups and their cultures either are recognised as political factors and as sources of power or they wither. The Afrikaner (of all South Africans) should not need to be told this. The lack of a vibrant English culture and ethnic in South Africa can *inter alia* be attributed to its absence from the political corridors of power. The crucial political/ constitutional dimension in the recognition of ethnicity and pluralism has yet to be conceded by the domestic left.

The perspective of the National Party — the other major political player in the transitional South Africa — *vis-à-vis* the ethnic factor also appears at a glance to have shifted considerably during the period of transition. In the late 1980s/early 1990s the party still spoke in a multi-racial/multi-ethnic idiom. A negotiated solution from the then-NP perspective would essentially have been a power-sharing agreement between the major ethnic communities — specifically the major political party of each ethnic community. Together with all the major political formations in the country — bar elements within Cosag and the extra-parliamentary right — the National Party today also talks in a non-racial idiom. The NP's understanding of non-racialism, however, is not the anti-ethnic perspective — or at least the anti-public or political ethnic perspective — of the broad South African left centred on the ANC.

The NP equates non-racialism with the absence of racial discrimination and therefore would still regard as ideal a negotiated solution involving permanent constitutionally guaranteed political power for all significant ethnic communities in South Africa. Therefore the NP's agreement to a five-year period of power-sharing to be followed by unfettered majoritarian 'democracy' should thus not be interpreted as reflecting the NP's abandonment of an ethnically, deeply divided perspective on South African society. 'Conservative' statements — including a recent one by De Klerk on the need for permanent political power-sharing and anti-majoritarian, consensus government — by other leading Nationalists appear to indicate that the constitutional concessions that have been made are not the result of an ideological conversion to a non-ethnic understanding of non-racialism (à la ANC) but the result of the essential give-and-take and power politics resulting from the process of constitutional negotiations itself. And as regards the latter there can be little doubt that the essential political perspectives held by the broad South African left are largely dominant — both within the constitutional negotiations themselves and significant social developments outside of Kempton Park itself (for example the appointment of the new SABC board).

The NP's current articulation — or rather lack of articulation — of an ethnic perspective is also the result of the party's lack of an intellectual base (the last remnants of which disappeared with De Klerk's 1989/1990 U-turn) and the governing party's attempt to distance itself by all means — even inappropriate ones — from the apartheid era and its central role therein. The fact that the largely English-speaking liberal slideaway (see Wentzel 1986) of the 1980s has been followed by an Afrikaans-speaking slideaway — which has both political and intellectual dimensions — in the 1990s has also contributed to the absence of an honest, empirically grounded discourse about ethnicity and competing definitions of nationhood and nationalism in South Africa.

The different understandings of 'non-racialism' between two of the major political players are only one of a number of dimensions — although arguably the most important — to the normative vacuum within which the South African process of political transition is taking place. This normative vacuum is only superficially hidden by multiparty commitments embodied in documents such as Codesa's Declaration of Intent and the National Peace Accord. This normative vacuum exists because three years into the process of transition the South African political and intellectual elite have yet to even begin to deal with what Horowitz called the 'metaconflict'. In other words, we have not yet reached a societal consensus on whether the conflict in South Africa is essentially an ethnic or national one (as Giliomee and Schlemmer have been so bravely arguing for some time now) or whether it is in reality a class-driven conflict between a privileged elite and an impoverished and 'oppressed' mass. Until this society honestly answers this question (and embodies its answer in a national accord or pact — similar to that agreed to by the various ethnic communities in Malaysia), non-superficial constitutional negotiations, political stability, economic growth, 'nation-building' and 'intercommunal reconciliation' will remain limited to academic gatherings such as this.

In an otherwise tendentious and superficial recent paper titled 'Taking non-racialism seriously' Taylor (1993) does make the point that 'non-racialism' 'is one of the most often used, yet least-defined concepts in South African politics'. Unfortunately Taylor can do no better than define non-racialism as a 'critical concept' which revolves around a 'refusal to explain South Africa in terms of "black" and "white"'. Non-racialism as defined by Taylor — and his definition is largely in accordance with its understanding within the charterist fold — is thus a politically inspired, poorly disguised attempt to solve the national/ethnic question by defining it away. Taylor and other ideologically anti-ethnic South African 'intellectuals' have and continue to play a major destructive role in preventing the ethnic/national dimension of the metaconflict from being seriously addressed — intellectually and ultimately politically.

It is thus necessary and crucially important that liberal and other non-Marxist scholars in South Africa critique the current dominant and politically motivated understanding of 'non-racialism'. Taylor's arguments about 'non-racialism' and the alleged non-existence of social phenomena such as tribe, ethnic group and race might be a little more subtle than Nyerere's post-independence dictum 'kill the tribe, build the nation', but are potentially as much part of a Jacobin-style of nation-building as the latter.

Conclusion: It is necessary in a contribution which highlights an alleged absence of frank consideration of the ethnic dimension of South African society and politics to acknowledge the recent holding of two major conferences in South Africa on the issue, that is a conference on 'Ethnicity, society and conflict in Natal', which was held in Pietermaritzburg in September 1992, and a conference on 'Ethnicity, identity and nationalism in South Africa: comparative perspectives', which was held in Grahamstown in April 1993. The fact that such conferences are being held in South Africa and the greater prominence that the ethnic and national dimension of the South African question is receiving are certainly to be welcomed. But one would be mistaken to view these developments as reflecting a serious rethink within the South African social science fraternity as to relevance and significance of ethnicity and nationalism.

A persual of the papers presented at both conferences — particularly those by South African academics — reflects the persistence of a decidedly materialist, neo-Marxist view of these social phenomena (in particular ethnicity) by most South African scholars working in this field. The paper by Taylor (1993) is a typical example of this intellectual genre. It is indeed interesting to note that it is the international participants to such conferences who invariably adhere to what I have termed more 'ethnically realistic' perspectives. The fact that it is an 'outsider' who has written what is unquestionably the most balanced and ethnically realistic book on recent South African politics is related to the same point.

Apartheid has destroyed many things in South Africa, including (it would unfortunately appear) the intellectual ability to recognise both the staying power of ethnicity/nationalism and the positive dimensions of these social phenomena. The vilification of ethnicity as an allegedly purely divisive and negative phenomena needs to balanced by recognition of the positive, community-building dimension of recognising ethnicity — particularly within multi-ethnic states such as South Africa. Both modernisationist and Marxist views on ethnicity and nationalism share a common materialist/economistic assumption about these phenomena. The psychological/cultural and 'primordial' dimensions of these phenomena — emphasised *inter alia* by Horowitz (1985) — need to be acknowledged. Once this takes place at an intellectual level in South Africa — it is already happening in the West — one can seriously start talking about nation/state-building and interethnic reconciliation. Until then, we are only fooling ourselves.

REFERENCES

ADAM, H. & MOODLEY, K. 1986. *South Africa without apartheid.* Cape Town: Maskew Miller/ Longman.

ADAM, H. & MOODLEY, K. 1993. *South Africa: a negotiated revolution.* Johannesburg: Jonathan Ball.

CONNOR, W. 1972. Nation-building or nation-destroying. *World Politics,* 24.

GILIOMEE, H. & SCHLEMMER, L. (eds). 1989a. *Negotiating South Africa's future.* Johannesburg: Southern.

GILIOMEE, H. & SCHLEMMER, L. 1989b. *From apartheid to nation-building.* Cape Town: Oxford University Press.

HANF, T. 1989. The prospects of accommodation in communal conflicts: a comparative study. In: GILIOMEE, H. & SCHLEMMER, L. *Negotiating South Africa's future.* Johannesburg: Southern.

HOROWITZ, D. 1985. *Ethnic groups in conflict.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

HOROWITZ, D. 1991. *A democratic South Africa? Constitutional engineering in a divided society.* Cape Town: Oxford University Press.

MONTVILLE, J. (ed.). 1990. *Conflict and peacekeeping in multi-ethnic states.* Lexington: Lexington Books.

NEUBERGER, B. 1986. *National self-determination in postcolonial Africa.* Boulder: Lynne Rienner, Colorado.

RA-ANAN, U. *et al.* (eds). 1991. *State and nation in multi-ethnic societies.* Manchester: Manchester University Press.

RANTETE, J. & GILIOMEE, H. 1992. Transition to democracy through transaction? Bilateral negotiations between the ANC and NP in South Africa. *African Affairs,* Volume 91, pp. 515-542.

ROTHCHILD, D. & OLORUNSOLA, V. 1983. *State versus ethnic claims: African policy dilemmas.* Boulder: Westview, Colorado.

SLABBERT, F. VAN ZYL. 1992. *The quest for democracy: South Africa in transition.* Johannesburg: Penguin.

TAMARKIN, M. 1992. *Nationalism, nation-building and civil society in Africa: lessons for South Africa.* Pretoria: Seminar, Africa Institute, 30 July.

TAYLOR, R. 1993. *Taking non-racialism seriously.* Paper presented at a conference on ethnicity, identity and nationalism at Rhodes University, Grahamstown.

WENTZEL, J. 1986. The liberal slide away. In: *Liberation and the middleground.* Johannesburg: Institute of Race Relations.

SECTION

III

THE CONSTITUTIONAL AND INSTITUTIONAL BASES OF DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA

CHAPTER

9 The constitutional and institutional bases of democratic government
Lourens du Plessis

10 Response to Lourens du Plessis' contribution
Willem van Vuuren

11 From apartheid to *liberal* democracy
Robert Mattes

12 Steps toward the strategy of nation-building: response to Lourens du Plessis
Margot Pienaar

13 Majority rule and minority rights
Albie Sachs

CHAPTER 9

The constitutional and institutional bases of democratic government

Lourens du Plessis

The subject to be discussed in this chapter raises several questions: What should a constitutional framework for democracy look like? How can constitutionalism be attained in a deeply divided society? How is democratic government institutionalised in a segmented polity, maintaining an optimal balance between freedom and order and the freedom of the individual and the collective demands of society? How can the communal diversity in civil society be accommodated? What does supremacy of the law entail? More 'technical' matters regarding electoral systems, centralised government versus federalism as well as the need for and methods of power sharing may also be raised.

I intend to deal with constitutionalism as an essential feature of democratic government *on the assumption* that the optimum protection and accommodation of basic human rights and civil liberties are preconditions for optimal democracy. This is not to suggest that rights and a rights culture *by themselves* will serve as the 'Open Sesame!' to a South African utopia of goodwill and peace. There is no longer an easy way in which a reasonably peaceful and orderly society can be achieved. Cleavages among rivalling factions have become too profound and violence too perennial for peace simply to dawn upon this country once mechanisms for protecting rights and liberties are in place. A rights culture of a very particular kind will have to be inculcated with South Africans from the grassroots to the highest echelons of government before constitutionalism could become the cornerstone of inter- and intracommunal reconciliation. Working towards this common goal could at the same time direct the demanding long-term enterprise of nation-building.

The success of political transition in South Africa will depend, first, on how adequately political intolerance can be allayed and, second, on how effectively political over-excitement can be quenched and utopian material expectations bridled. The constitutional basis of democratic government in a future South Africa will therefore have to be geared towards negotiating these two key hurdles. How this can be done is best understood from a rights perspective.

The relationship between democracy and political tolerance will first be considered. Second, various rights traditions in South Africa will be surveyed and compared. The chapter will then be concluded with a discussion of the aims which constitutional democracy could realistically endeavour to achieve in a future South Africa.

DEMOCRACY, POLITICAL TOLERANCE AND CONSTITUTIONALISM

It is sometimes said that democracy is institutionalised tolerance. This is but one side of the coin. The other side is that political tolerance in a democracy is meaningful only if it is not just *institutionalised* but also *actively practised*. The initial statement is nevertheless helpful because it highlights the crucial interconnectedness of political tolerance and democratic institutions.

Political scientists doing empirical research on the levels of political tolerance in society frequently employ as their criterion the extent to which political opponents are prepared to put up with one another's exercise of civil liberties. To exercise civil liberties is to actuate basic human rights. The most apparent basic rights underpinning the exercise of civil liberties in the political sphere are the rights to free association, free speech (including press freedom) and political participation.

Democratic political institutions are designed to optimise the enjoyment of civil liberties. They do so by lending protection to the basic rights underpinning these liberties. With the advent of justiciable bills of rights as protective mechanisms in modern-day democracies, the question of *how* best to protect basic rights has become a constitutional question.

Democracy manifests itself in two ways: first, *as a process* of popular participation in government by, for instance, voting, forming political parties, organising and addressing political meetings and rallies, writing in the press, demonstrating and petitioning the government; and second, in an *institutional* shape, as a configuration of means and mechanisms vouching for the actualisation of democracy as a process.

I understand *constitutionalism* to refer to the *intactness of constitutional means and mechanisms warranting institutional democracy*. Since my approach is rights-oriented, I am interested mainly in the constitutional means and mechanisms designed to protect individuals' basic rights thereby optimising the exercise of civil liberties. As mentioned previously the mere existence of these means and mechanisms does not guarantee that political tolerance will in fact be practised. However, they could condition the realisation of political tolerance not only in an institutional but also in an attitudinal sense. As institutional devices invoked to help ensure compliance with democratic 'rules of the game' they are educative and could help inculcate an attitude of tolerance which may in turn result in its actual practice. This can only happen, however, if the means and mechanisms are *legitimate* as well, that is to say if they enjoy the support of and acceptance by the populace.

Institutionalised tolerance does not imply, nor does it require, the elimination of all conflict in society. The purposeful *accommodation of conflict* — and not its complete eradication — is a hallmark of democracy. This means that constitutionalism in South Africa will have to be cultivated on the assumption that conflict in society is inevitable and could indeed stand the furtherance of a democratic culture and the evolution of democratic institutions in good stead.

Political tolerance does not (as the discussion thus far may seem to suggest) allude to the actualisation of only those human rights directly linked with participation in political processes. These processes are as a matter of fact not ends in themselves but a means of affecting the organisation of society as a whole. Constitutionalism likewise bears upon the political and social order in all its ramifications thereby sustaining a framework for the accommodation and fulfilment of the strictly political as well as the more outrightly material aspirations of the populace. Constitutionalism could therefore be instrumental not only in allaying political intolerance but also in helping to redress material inequalities in society by, for example, providing for the operationalisation of second generation human rights (see 'The notion of generations of rights' and 'The Liberal tradition' below). In a country like South Africa obstacles in the latter category will somehow have to be negotiated lest unbridled material expectations subvert political stability.

HUMAN RIGHTS TRADITIONS IN SOUTH AFRICA

The notion of generations of rights

The differences between the three human rights traditions in South Africa which I am about to distinguish are best understood in view of the distinction which is nowadays drawn between three generations of human rights.

First-generation rights are premised upon the traditional liberal-democratic idea of individual *freedom from* interference by government in clearly defined private or personal spheres. *Second- and third-generation* rights, on the other hand, embody the idea of individual as well as collective *freedom towards* promoting and attaining certain (sometimes not so clearly defined) social (and global) goals. While the protection of first generation rights calls for as little government interference as possible, the promotion of second and third generation rights cannot be realised without government intervention. Examples of first generation or 'blue' rights are the traditional 'freedom rights' such as the right to freedom of speech, freedom of the press and freedom of movement, the right to a fair trial and due process of law and the right to privacy and equal protection under the law. Second generation or 'red' rights are mainly economic and welfare rights, such as the right to eat and work, the right to shelter, the right to education and the right to appropriate health care. Third-generation or 'green' rights are considered to be 'peoples' rights' (or 'group rights') to, for instance, a clean environment, development and self-determination — a pretty mixed bag in other words.

'Generation' in this distinction denotes chronology rather than hierarchy: it refers to a growth in the awareness of various categories of rights and does not prioritise certain categories in relation to others. It is preferable therefore to speak of *generations* of rights rather than *tiers* as is sometimes done.

The liberationist tradition

The liberationist or charterist tradition is probably South Africa's oldest human rights tradition in the post-World War II sense of the word. It has also been the most visible in terms of producing official human rights statements in the course of the struggle against apartheid. The political and philosophical underpinnings of this tradition range from social democracy to democratic socialism.

The first human rights charter which emerged from this tradition (and, indeed, the first South African human rights document reminiscent of post-World War II international human rights declarations) was the bill of rights included in the ANC document 'African claims in South Africa', adopted by the organisation's annual conference on 16 December 1943. It was a 'positive' response, from an African perspective, to the Atlantic Covenant first adopted by US President F.D. Roosevelt and British Prime Minister W.S. Churchill on 14 August 1941, and subsequently ratified by the allied governments. The covenant confined what the allied nations hoped to achieve through the war to a number of human rights-related aims. The bill of rights included in the 'African claims' called for (*inter alia*) one person one vote, equal justice in the courts of law, freedom of land ownership and the repeal of the pass laws. The then South African Prime Minister, J.C. Smuts, dismissed these claims as 'propagandistic'.

The ANC's resistance to apartheid remained strongly human rights-oriented, even through the stormy days of the Defiance Campaign in the early fifties, and finally found expression in the well-known Freedom Charter from which the appellation charterist tradition (or movement) is derived. The charter was approved by the Congress of the People at Kliptown in Johannesburg on the 25 and 26 June 1955. It is a policy statement which also expresses human rights ideals. It was supplemented in 1989 with the ANC's 'Constitutional guidelines for a democratic South Africa'. In 1990 the ANC published a document entitled 'A bill of rights for a new South Africa', based on both the Freedom Charter and the Constitutional Guidelines. This Bill of Rights is continuously being revised (the latest version dating from May 1992) and constitutes the basis for the ANC's negotiations with other parties on a future constitutional dispensation.

The Bill of Rights included in the 'African claims' is mostly couched in 'demands language' while the Freedom Charter and the Constitutional Guidelines articulate rights in rather idealistic 'policy terms'. The Bill of Rights for a New South Africa, on the other hand, is framed in such language that it could readily be included as a justiciable and enforceable bill of rights in a constitution.

Human rights documents in the liberationist tradition all recognise the protection of first generation rights without qualification but at the same time are strongly orientated towards the promotion of second generation rights. Guidelines laid down in the May 1992 revision of the Bill of Rights for a New South Africa are worth noting. In the general section to article 11 it is stated that '[a]ll men, women and children have the right to enjoy basic social, educational and welfare rights' (article 11(1)). It is furthermore envisaged that 'legislation shall ensure the creation of a progressively expanding floor of minimum rights' in *inter alia* the welfare sphere (article 11(2)), taking into account 'national priorities, the availability of resources and the capacity of the beneficiaries of such rights to contribute towards the costs involved' (article 11(3)). It is also provided that 'resources may be diverted from richer to poorer areas, and timetables may be established for the phased extension of legislation and minimum standards from area to area' (article 11(4)).

Article 12(13)-(16) of this Bill of Rights deals with typical third-generation (environmental) rights.

The liberal tradition

This tradition has been accommodating especially those whites who have expressed much of their opposition to the apartheid system in terms of human rights. The first bill of rights drafted in an overtly liberal vein was included in a report on *Franchise proposals and constitutional safeguards* prepared for the Progressive Party of South Africa (the Molteno Report). Generally speaking, however, the liberal tradition has not always been as visible as the liberationist tradition in producing human rights charters or declarations. Many of its exponents who are intellectuals have nonetheless written quite extensively on human rights and related issues and in this sense the liberal tradition has been quite visible (and audible) especially since the beginning of the seventies.

The First International Conference on Human Rights in South Africa was held from 22-26 January 1979 in Cape Town, and it was attended and addressed by eminent human rights scholars from all over the world. The conference was also of particular interest to the South African participants — mostly white English-speaking liberals and a few Afrikaner dissidents — who expressed their unequivocal opposition to the flagrant violations of human rights in apartheid South Africa. The organisation Lawyers for Human Rights was later formed as a result of this conference.

On 1-2 May 1986 a symposium on *A bill of rights for South Africa* was hosted by the Faculty of Law at the University of Pretoria. What was significant about this gathering was that it was the first of its kind to be hosted by an Afrikaans-medium academic institution.

On 10 July 1986 the KwaZulu Natal Indaba, which discussed proposals for a new constitution for provincial and local government in Natal, accepted a bill of rights for the protection of groups and individuals as part of a proposed (regional) constitution which has, however, not been implemented.

The South African Federation of Chambers of Industry set out the basic human rights they support in a *Business Charter of Social, Economic and Political Rights*. This document has no official political authority but still expresses the human rights sentiments of a particular grouping in the organised business and industrial community in South Africa.

The South African Law Commission had never really been involved in politically controversial issues until it received an instruction from the Minister of Justice on 23 April 1986 to publish a report and make recommendations on the protection of group and human rights in South Africa. A working paper was released early in 1989 followed by an interim report in August 1991. Both documents strongly advocate a bill of rights for South Africa. The commission has come to the conclusion that such a bill would be the most suitable instrument for the protection of human rights in South Africa. It would, however, have to be a charter which would be acceptable to the majority of the population and the Law Commission recommends that it should preferably be phased in over a period of time in order to attain such legitimacy. The commission has also drafted two subsequent bill of rights proposals.

The five human rights documents mentioned above are all characterised by an eye-catching prioritisation of first-generation rights. A limited approach to second-generation rights is evident in the paucity of references to such rights in the bill of rights included in the Molteno Report, the bill of rights of the KwaZulu Natal Indaba, the charter of the South African Federation of Chambers of Industry and in the South African Law Commission's first bill of rights proposal. This general statement should, however, be qualified somewhat in respect of at least three of these five documents:

- The bill of rights included in the Molteno Report alludes to second-generation rights but does not accord them constitutional recognition. It authorises, for instance, in its equality clause (Section 1(b)), the 'specific provision, of whatsoever kind, of the advancement of any socially or educationally backward class of the community', yet this clause also provides for the allocation of public amenities to 'different classes of the community' (which can also be read as 'different races') on a separate but equal basis (Section 1(a)).

  Section 16(a) envisages the provision of free and compulsory education for every child for at least eight years 'from and after a date to be fixed in each province by legislation'. This second-generation right in other words enjoys nominal constitutional backing but has no inherent constitutional force, since its operationalisation depends on legislative assent. Section 16(b) moreover authorises racially segregated schools.
- On 1 December 1992 the Legislative Assembly of KwaZulu approved a further Constitution for the State of KwaZulu/Natal which entrenches an extensive and detailed list of fundamental rights and freedoms. Among these are a number of socioeconomic rights, such as educational rights, the right to work, rights of senior citizens and housing rights. But this constitution and its bill of rights have also not been implemented.
- The Law Commission initially argued that a 'bill of rights is not the place for enforcing positive obligations against the state'. In its second proposal, however, it does refer to such rights to a limited extent, without making them 'justiciable and enforceable in a positive way'. Section 27(f) of its (second) proposed bill of rights, for example, affirms the right of a person to claim medical care from the state *but only* if (s)he cannot provide for his or her own subsistence and medical needs due to physical or mental illness or disability. Section 38 purports to promote all the fundamental rights set forth in the proposed bill of rights (including — presumably — second-generation rights) by using them as guidelines 'in instituting and carrying out legislative programmes and executive and administrative planning and action'. It is conceivable that the endorsement of affirmative action in Section 3(b) may, in certain circumstances, also stand the achievement of Section 38's objectives in good stead. The commission's overall approach to second-generation rights nevertheless remains limited.

Reactionary liberalism

At first glance 'reactionary liberalism' appears to be a misnomer but this is the most appropriate way of describing this youngest of the three leading human rights traditions in South Africa. It reflects the National Party Government's thinking on human rights as expressed in the 'Government's proposals on a charter of fundamental rights' of 2 February 1993.

Government support for the idea of a justiciable bill of rights is of a fairly recent origin. In May 1984 the Minister of Justice, H.J. Coetzee, published an article in a law journal in which he expressed strong opposition to this idea. Two years later he instructed the South African Law Commission to bring out a report and make recommendations on the protection of group and human rights in South Africa. The Commission's first report, recommending (*inter alia*) a bill of rights for South Africa, was widely perceived as reflecting government thinking on the subject. At the same time it was received as a pioneering endeavour given the traditional thinking on the subject by the majority of whites, and it was extensively debated. As indicated earlier the commission in its second report made certain concessions towards recognising second-generation rights — a shift 'to the left' in other words.

The government's proposed charter of rights contains no reference to the previous endeavours of the Law Commission and is politically 'to the right' of the commission's latest proposal. (Spokespersons of the Law Commission as a matter of fact, have distanced themselves and the commission from the government's charter.) The charter professes to draw on liberal principles (and to a large extent it does) but it invokes these principles without unduly disturbing the *status quo*. For instance, it is proclaimed that the charter is based on the principle of 'negative enforcement' thereby excluding the possibility of charging the government with the enforcement of second-generation rights. Accordingly the right to participation in the economy is described as a 'right freely and on equal footing to engage in economic enterprise' (article 15) but no reference is made to remedying economic inequalities which have resulted from the historical injustices of apartheid.

The right to education and training is described as a 'right to at least primary education for which the State with due regard to its financial means shall be responsible' (article 14(5)(a)). At the same time it is said to be a right to religion-oriented education (article 14(2)), to tuition in a pupil's mother tongue (article 14(3)), to determining the medium of instruction of educational institutions (article 14(4)) and to establish and operate private educational institutions (article 14(6)). In these latter instances (where concerns central to the privileged white minority's understanding of a right to education are raised) no mention is made of the state having 'due regard to its financial means'.

It is also maintained that the charter is based on the principle of verticality. This means that it operates against the state but not against private individuals or institutions (article 2) — in other words, it lacks horizontal operation, or *Drittwirkung* as the Germans call it. This opens the door to, for instance, 'private' discrimination. In countries where human rights protection is cast in a liberal mould, the tendency in recent years has been to recognise (rather than to shy away from) especially the *Drittwirkung* of anti-discrimination clauses in bills of rights.

To sum up: the government's charter can be described as liberal in as far as it professes to acknowledge the merit of recognised liberal principles of human rights protection. At the same time, however, it is reactionary in that it relies on these principles in an attempt to fortify vested interests against claims likely to disturb existing patterns of socioeconomic privilege.

The reason(s) for the differences between the three traditions

The differences between the liberationist tradition on the one hand and the two liberal traditions on the other hand cannot really be attributed to the dissimilarity of 'African' and 'Western' philosophies of human rights. In the African context there are, broadly speaking, a *communitarian* and a *liberal* approach to human rights. There are also two types of communitarianism, namely *leftist collectivism* and *traditionalism*. The liberationist movement in South Africa has been liberal primarily in its approach to human rights and has to a growing extent developed in this direction. Certain emphases in human rights declarations in this tradition could be described as leftist collectivist. It should be borne in mind, however, that as far back as the early sixties, after a marathon treason trial, a conservative (white) South African court concluded that even the Freedom Charter, probably the 'most socialist' of all these declarations, can in no way be described as a 'communist document'. In addition, should one compare liberationist human rights charters (like the Freedom Charter) with, for instance, the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, the former declarations appear to be rather 'un-African' in that they betray very little traditionalist communitarian influence.

Differences in approach to human rights in South Africa should rather be attributed to socioeconomic conditions in society. It is simply a matter of transposing into human rights terms the claims of the have nots competing with the vested interests of the haves. Apartheid has not merely been a system of racial discrimination but also a class system vouching firstly and foremostly for the rights and interests of a predominantly racially defined 'aristocracy'. Against this background it becomes clear why within the liberationist tradition (representing the interests of the majority of have nots) strong sentiments are expressed in favour of the promotion and even enforcement of second-generation rights. The liberal haves' reliance on the 'negative enforcement' of first-generation rights then also makes sense: they are bent on protecting their vested interests against possible restitutional actions of a government representative of the have-not majority.

There are of course different emphases within the liberal tradition itself. For instance, it has been pointed out that while reactionary liberals find it almost impossible to reconcile themselves with the notion of constitutional recognition for second-generation rights, others within the broader liberal tradition are prepared to give it a chance. It is also worth noting that all liberals seem to have accepted that a future bill of rights should in some way authorise affirmative action — at least as an 'exception' to the rule of equality.

WHAT CONSTITUTIONALISM IN SOUTH AFRICA COULD AND SHOULD AIM TO ACHIEVE

I previously described constitutionalism in terms of the intactness of constitutional means and mechanisms warranting institutional democracy. Institutional democracy, in turn, was said to be a configuration of means and mechanisms vouching for the actualisation of popular participation in government. This conception of constitutionalism as a hallmark of democracy is neither utopian nor overstrained and could realistically be appealed to in South Africa.

Given the seemingly unbridgeable gaps between the various human rights traditions in this country, I am of the opinion that in a future dispensation constitutionalism, practically speaking, could manifest itself in substantial compliance with the following criteria:

(a) Legitimacy

The means and mechanisms warranting constitutionalism will have to be accepted by the bulk of the population as theirs. This implies that they will have to be perceived (and experienced) as democratic, just, effective and in accordance with shared value patterns of the community.

Legitimacy is the most crucial objective and at the same time will be the most difficult to achieve. Much will depend on how transition occurs. If, for instance, a constitution-making body is acceptable to the bulk of the populace, the legitimacy of the eventual constitutional dispensation will be enhanced. On the other hand it could be expected that the legitimacy of a future dispensation will need some time to grow to fruition. Much will depend on the extent to which compliance with the other criteria for constitutionalism (which I am about to discuss) could be achieved.

(b) Restrained government

The classical liberalist ideal of 'as little government as possible' — restricted government in other words — will not be accomplishable in this country. The government will have to be an active and authoritative participant in endeavours to attain an equitable redistribution of means and optimal equality. The best that we can hope for is restrained government, the features of which are the following:

- The government is accountable. In its most consequential form this means that both legislative and executive acts of government are susceptible to judicial review in terms of the 'basic rules of the game' contained in a justiciable bill of rights.
- The distinctiveness and autonomy of all the various facets of human life are recognised, respected and, indeed, vouched for. In other words, the government is not relied on to prescribe what 'good' art, the 'correct' religion, the best business principles or the most apposite moral norms is or are. At the same time, however, it is for the government, and especially the legal system, to procure a supportive framework within which art, religion and business can be practised in security.
- The autonomy of social institutions outside the sphere of authority of the state (in other words the institutions of civil society) is trenchantly recognised. Legal and constitutional means are nevertheless employed to vouch for the freedom and authority of each institution to manage its own affairs. These mechanisms also restrain the state's exercise of power. The state is required to help demarcate the elbowroom or operating-space of non-state institutions, as well as to provide and maintain the means for settling intra- and inter-institutional disputes and to invoke the law and legal mechanisms to this end. In principle, however, the state is deemed to have but a confined interest in the business of the institutions of civil society.
- There is adequate constitutional provision for the optimisation of government at a regional level. This principle has been accepted by all negotiating parties in South Africa. Its practical application in a final dispensation will still have to be negotiated, however.

(c) Legality

This criterion of constitutionalism refers to the fact that both the government and its subjects respect and obey the law. Legality is therefore not the same as legitimacy, although in practice they cohere and interact. Legitimacy, as was seen earlier, refers to the *de facto* popular acceptance and support which legal and political institutions enjoy. Legality means 'playing by the fundamental rules of the game' because they make sense. Legitimacy is therefore likely to beget legality, while violations of legality will probably undermine respect for legal institutions and erode their legitimacy.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

(d) Equity

Equity is a form of institutional justice providing for the individualised application of the 'rules of the game' to ensure that they measure up to the singular demands of a variety of peculiar concrete situations. It also calls for the avoidance of mere formalisms and for reliance on rules for the sake of human beings and not for the sake of the rules themselves. The political order and its 'rules of the game' are but a means to the end of human security, and not ends in themselves.

(e) Equality

De facto material equality would never be achieved in South Africa. Here I am referring to equality in an institutional sense. The decisive test for the extent to which the criterion of equality in this sense is complied with, is how successfully a legal and constitutional dispensation prevents *de jure* and *de facto* discrimination against people. This does not mean that all people are to be treated exactly the same in all circumstances. Differential treatment in certain circumstances and for certain purposes is held to be admissible. Certain criteria for differentiation however, have become profoundly suspect. Among these are race, ethnic origin, sex, class, religion and descent. Differentiation on any of these grounds for most purposes is taken to be discriminatory *per se*.

It has been accepted, however, that there may be instances in which people could be treated differentially even on the basis of one or more of the suspect grounds. This can be done, for instance, to redress injustices of the past as happens in the case of affirmative action as corrective equality. This last form of equality will have to be recognised constitutionally together with all other forms.

(f) The impartial settlement of disputes

Fulfilment of this criterion of constitutionalism presupposes the existence of an independent judiciary. In other words there should be independent 'referees' or adjudicators who apply the 'rules of the game' in a non-partisan way and, most importantly, the various legal processes and legal aid should be optimally accessible.

'Adjudicators' does not include only institutions operating as part of the formal court structure but also (judicial and quasi-judicial) administrative bodies as well as governmental and non-governmental agencies involved in settling disputes. As a matter of fact, community justice has come to play an increasingly important role in societies in which the legitimacy of formal court structures has become suspect and/or the idea and practice of a civil society is well developed.

(g) Popular participation in establishing and maintaining democratic institutions

Popular participation in the structures of constitutionalism is manifested by, firstly, the people's right to elect those who shape and maintain a constitutional dispensation and, secondly, the openness and 'user-friendliness' of the system's means and mechanisms to individuals as well as institutions in need of them. The processes of government also have to be optimally open to public scrutiny.

Whether popular participation in the means and mechanisms of constitutionalism necessarily includes the right of the people to directly elect the judiciary (especially at the level of superior courts) is controversial, however.

This final criterion brings us back to where we started. Democracy is a process of popular participation in government. Institutional democracy is a configuration of means and mechanisms vouching for the actualisation of this process. The degree and quality of *de facto* popular participation in establishing and maintaining democratic institutions therefore reflect on the intactness of these means and mechanisms. This is also how the achievements of constitutionalism will have to be evaluated in a future dispensation.

CHAPTER 10

Response to Lourens du Plessis' contribution

Willem van Vuuren

Professor Du Plessis' analysis is based on the explicit assumption of a mutually reinforcing relationship between democracy and human rights. 'Democratic political institutions are designed to optimise the enjoyment of civil liberties', he says, and 'the optimum protection and accommodation of basic human rights and civil liberties are preconditions to optimal democracy'.

He therefore employs a rights-oriented approach to deal with the question of a constitutional framework for democracy in South Africa — which means that he is interested 'mainly in the constitutional means and mechanisms designed to protect individuals' basic rights thereby optimising the exercise of civil liberties'.

This leads to a dual analysis involving both instrumental and normative investigations. On the one hand he is concerned about the practical *means* conducive to the end of institutional democracy, as well as about the question of *how* constitutionalism could be attained in a deeply divided society. On the other hand, he looks at what constitutionalism 'should' aim to achieve in normative terms.

While the author proceeds systematically with an insightful analysis to answer these fundamental questions, his eventual proposals suggest that the instrumental questions regarding (specific) means to achieve normative ends are answered largely in (general) normative terms.

If it is correctly inferred that the various introductory 'how' questions imply a set of instrumental questions dealing with realistic, viable, and specifiable means, then the concluding 'criteria' frustrate expectations of more practical suggestions concerning concrete 'means and mechanisms'.

However, even as general norms in compliance with the concept of constitutionalism, the suggested criteria raise several questions.

First, the meaning and validity of a significant number of criteria depend on a broad consensus about 'basic rules of the game'. The *legality* norm (see Chapter 9), for example, 'whereby both government and subjects are bound to respect and obey the law, essentially means "playing by the fundamental rules of the game" because they make sense'.

In the same vein, *equity* is described as 'a form of institutional justice providing for the individualised application of the "rules of the game" ...' And the *impartial settlement of disputes* requires 'an independent judiciary ... applying the "rules of the game"'.

With reference to governmental accountability, as a feature of *restrained government*, it is explained: 'In its most consequential form this means that both legislative and executive acts of government are susceptible to judicial review in terms of the "basic rules of the game" contained in a justiciable bill of rights.'

This not only suggests that the notion of the 'basic rules of the game' is of crucial importance in understanding the normative basis of constitutional democracy, but also implies that the meaning of this notion depends on an understanding of what a 'justiciable bill of rights' constitutes.

While the contribution surveys various human rights traditions in South Africa, and in that process refers to different types of bills of rights, it does not make it clear what such a bill could possibly constitute, other than offering general norms for rights-based constitutionalism.

In other words, the reader is presented with a constitutional framework, said to be based on justiciable human rights, but defined in broad normative terms. These terms depend heavily on a notion of the 'basic rules of the game'. And, in turn, this notion is dependent on the content and meaning of a justiciable bill of rights. The whole argument therefore appears to become circular, begging the question about a justiciable bill of rights and a rights-based constitution, and other conceptually dependent questions about what constitutionalism in South Africa could and should aim at.

Second, the implied need for a broad consensus on rights-related 'rules of the game', amid 'the seemingly unbridgeable gaps between the various human rights traditions in this country', makes this notion even more problematical. This difficulty is also experienced with the *legitimacy* criterion, which requires the popular acceptance of a particular constitutional order, as legitimacy depends on the existence of 'shared value patterns of the community' in accordance with which such an order could be perceived as legitimate.

Elsewhere explicit recognition is given to the deeply divided nature of South Africa with its 'communal diversity in civil society' and structured socioeconomic inequalities that give rise to vastly divergent conceptions of human rights and civil liberties — thus suggesting the explicit recognition of factors which question the implicit assumptions about broadly shared values and rules.

If the achievement of constitutionalism depends largely on a social value consensus, the combination of traditional communal divisions and vast material inequalities must comprise a huge obstacle to its success. Thus, if constitutionalism is to be achieved under the historical conditions of a divided plural society which threaten viable constitution-building, then it seems that existing debates on the accommodation of political pluralism cannot entirely be ignored in dealing with this problem.

With regard to South African pluralism it has been argued that 'the fundamental cleavages are not generally muted by cross-cutting membership in associations, which for legal and traditional reasons have tended to be "homogeneous" in composition. The main exceptions emanate from religious affiliation, the process of acculturation, and the continuing industrialisation of the country' (Boulle 1984:36).

However, these exceptions have not proved very effective in softening *political* lines of cleavage. Opinion surveys conducted since the unbanning of oppositional organisations in 1990 indicate that political preferences consistently coincide with racial or ethnic lines of cleavage.

Given the high levels of political intolerance, radicalisation and racial polarisation that exist, and the accompanying racial conflict potential, it seems that descriptions of South African society in terms of 'conflict pluralism', especially of the racial variety, are still relevant.

In the seventies, Degenaar (quoted in Boulle 1984) had already suggested that the situation which existed at that time could be described in terms of 'conflict pluralism with a possible development in the direction of consociational pluralism which could be the stage of transition towards a fully-fledged consensus pluralism ...' He added that consociational democracy should take priority over majoritarian democracy as better suited to the nature of South Africa's divided plural society (*Ibid.*:37).

Consociational writers have generalised this view by asserting that stable democracy, unless it is moderated by consociational features, is not viable in divided plural societies. This is particularly the case of societies such as South Africa, where there are likely to be permanent political majorities and permanent political minorities, with the permanent political minorities being excluded indefinitely from power.

They argue that: 'This is to violate the "primary rule" of democracy, that those affected by political decisions should have a chance of participating directly or indirectly in their making, and to replace it with the "secondary rule", that the will of the majority should prevail' (*Ibid.*:18). For this reason consociationalism seeks to relegate the majority rule principle in favour of a proportionality principle that allows all groups to participate in decision-making sites of the system.

Philippe Schmitter and Terry Karl (1991:79) put the problem as follows: 'What happens when a properly assembled majority regularly makes decisions that harm some minority, especially a threatened cultural or ethnic group? In these circumstances, successful democracies tend to qualify the central principle of majority rule in order to protect minority rights.'

While consociationalism constitutes one particular set of such qualifications, their suggestions cover a far wider range of possibilities. There could, for example, be requirements for concurrent majorities in several different constituencies (confederalism), guarantees securing the autonomy of local or regional governments against the demands of the central authority (federalism), or the negotiating of social pacts between major social groups such as business and labour (neo-corporatism).

The possibility that such qualifications can take the form of constitutional provisions that place certain matters beyond the reach of majorities (bills of rights), is also presented. However, as will be argued, Du Plessis's rights approach does not involve the effective use of constitutional restraints to curb majority domination.

In the South African context it can be said that a winner-takes-all form of majoritarianism that excludes 'permanent minorities' permanently is certainly not likely to generate the kind of popular legitimacy that Du Plessis regards as the 'most crucial' objective of democratisation — and although he admits that it is also the most difficult one, not much actual recognition is given to the difficulties, which all seem to relate directly to the debated problems of political pluralism.

This is definitely not to suggest that the perverted, self-serving forms of consociational democracy proposed by the President's Council and manifested in the Constitution of 1983 should be seriously reconsidered. Nor does it mean that the relevant academic arguments by South Africa analysts such as Lijphart, Degenaar, Giliomee and Boulle should be uncritically accepted. But the pluralism debates do offer perspectives for dealing with problems of legitimacy, social consensus and democratic consolidation in divided societies, for which a pure rights-oriented approach (as applied by the author) appear to be too limited.

Third, while the author convincingly dismisses the viability of severely '*restricted* government', his alternative proposals for '*restrained* government' (as 'the best that we can hope for') do not convince as containing any real and effective constraints on governmental power, particularly if this power is going to be exercised in a highly centralised unitary system.

There can be hardly any doubt about the need for authoritative and efficient government to protect a fledgling democracy and secure constitutionalism in a new South Africa. But history, including our own, abounds with examples of ineffectively restrained authoritative rule that degenerated into authoritarian domination, thus making the criterion of restrained government a very crucial one not only for achieving institutional democracy, but also for sustaining it.

A legitimate, but constitutionally restrained government does not have to mean weak government. On the contrary, it can actually result in exactly the opposite if the restraints are designed to prevent the abuse of power and undermining of the democratic *system* of government.

In other words, strong and authoritative government is achievable under constitutional restraints, if the restraints are directed towards the protection of the democratic polity, and against the *self*-protection, self-entrenchment, and self-enrichment of a politically self-interested regime.

The proposed set of features that condition restrained government (see Chapter 9) unfortunately does not offer any clear and concrete means that would constitute effective safeguards. In fact, it contains a number of riders and hedged formulations of the kind that have historically been used and abused by authoritarian regimes.

For example, it is explicitly stated that the 'distinctiveness and autonomy of all the various facets of human life are recognised, respected and indeed vouched for' (see Chapter 9). But then this simply means 'in other words' that the government is '*not relied on* to prescribe what "good" art, the "correct" religion, the best principles or the most apposite moral norms are' (my italics). Surely, the question of 'reliance' is irrelevant. What matters is whether the government would be *allowed* to be prescriptive in these areas — and under what circumstances.

Similarly, the autonomy of institutions of civil society is 'trenchantly recognised' and legal constitutional means are employed to 'vouch for the freedom and authority of each institution to manage its own affairs'. But 'the state is required to help demarcate the ... operating-space of non-state institutions' and is 'in principle ... deemed' to have only a confined interest in the business of civil institutions.

In what way does this *practically* restrain the state from undue interference in the institutions of civil society and allow only a very limited (strategically irrelevant) space for their 'own affairs'? Are the lessons of *realpolitik* not that powerful governments cannot be relied upon to constrain themselves for *principled* reasons if it inhibits their power ambitions?

It is also stated that constitutional provision for the 'optimisation of government at a regional level' has been accepted *in principle* by all negotiating parties and that only its practical application still has to be negotiated. However, it cannot be assumed that the public consensus on the principle implies such a degree of unanimity about the meaning of optimal regional government that it makes its practical elaboration unproblematic.

Because of its susceptibility to equivocation, and the reality of strategic interests that lie behind the differences in interpretation, this principle needs a clear definition to be of any practical use as a criterion for restrained government.

History has shown that public confessions of faith in 'strong' regional government need not be irreconcilable with the practice of concentrating power in a highly centralised government. It all depends on whether the so-called strength of regional governments is determined by their guaranteed (relative) autonomy and legally entrenched competencies, or whether 'strong' is meant in the sense of being empowered by central government to impose its will (like, for example, the *Gauleiter* system of powerful state-appointed administrators in the *Lander* of the Third Reich).

The important democratic principle of accountability is presented as another feature of restrained government. But accountability cannot be effectively exercised if the principle of accessibility does not apply, that is, if public access to information about the government's management of resources for which it is supposed to be accountable to the public, is not *also* guaranteed.

In his final criterion for constitutionalism, the author alludes to this problem by declaring that 'the processes of government ... have to be optimally open to public scrutiny'. However, in the light of the title, the question still remains as to what the constitutional, legal and institutional bases of 'optimally open' government could be - other than a well-meant thought. Could it involve the scrapping of acts protecting bureaucratic secrecy? Or constitutional provision for public access to important decision-making forums on public matters, or at least to relevant records? Or constitutionally entrenched press freedom?

Therefore, as they are presented, the features of 'restrained government' appear to be too reliant on the assumed goodness and principled public-mindedness of democratically elected governments to allow real constraints on their power. As the principles and qualifications are often formulated in relative terms, with manipulable ambiguities, the proposed features do not seem to be very meaningful as practical means of ensuring restrained government.

Fourth, it is argued that the norm of *equality* requires constitutional recognition of affirmative action as '*corrective equality*', which will have to be based on racial and other relevant forms of differentiation. If affirmative action is to redress injustices of the past that resulted from racial discrimination, for example, a strong argument in favour of a racially based equalisation policy can indeed be mounted.

While it is not clear what exactly the 'constitutional recognition' of affirmative action should involve in the South African context, case studies conducted elsewhere indicate that constitutionally entrenched or authorised measures for corrective action have been counterproductive in the long run, creating more problems than they solved in the short term. The issue is therefore highly problematic and requires very careful consideration and clear thinking if it is to be part of a workable democratic constitution.

Staby puts it as follows: 'In every society which attempts to practice affirmative action, there exists the very real danger that unless the concept is clearly understood, its goals and policies defined and employed sensitively, it can be used as a pretext for political patronage, or worse, to camouflage nepotism aimed at consolidating power' (*Werksdokument SOD*, April 1993:126).

Such affirmative action would not only fail to achieve its positive social goals, but threaten the very democratic constitutional order it is supposed to strengthen. Instead of promoting equal opportunity and access to social sites of power and status and facilitating the development of the underdeveloped and poor, it will serve to empower the powerful and privileged.

Thus, rather than raising levels of human development and social justice in the national interest, it would serve the selfish power interests of an incumbent regime, by helping it to entrench itself through the creation of a dependent class of loyal opportunists and careerists, and a specially protected, bloated, and corruption-prone bureaucracy.

Apartheid has often been depicted as such a self-serving and destructive form of affirmative action. It meant not only discrimination in favour or against certain racial groups, but also 'jobs for pals', corruption, and self-entrenchment through ethnic patronage — that is, the abuse of power by an Afrikaans-speaking electoral majority (albeit within a white minority system) to keep itself in government.

However, whereas the Nationalists had to patronise about a million voters to maintain their majority status, an ANC government under new democratic conditions would have a vastly bigger constituency looking to it to fulfil its 'liberation' promises. And as this is likely to have a critical impact on the size, quality and power of an unelected bureaucracy, it could have serious implications for democratic government.

The question is not whether there should be a form of affirmative action in a new South Africa, but *what* it should mean and *how* it should be applied in order to promote its positive social objectives without making it susceptible to negative party-political exploitation. Unfortunately the equality criterion is not defined in such a way that it makes this clear.

Fifth, in addition to the basic assumption of a relationship of mutual reinforcement between democracy and the means and mechanisms protecting fundamental rights, a similar relationship is suggested between such means and mechanisms, on the one hand, and the inculcation of a tolerant rights culture on the other. In other words, it is assumed that institutional devices and attitudinal dispositions also interact in such a way that they reciprocally condition each other.

However, the author cautions that means and mechanisms can fulfil such a conditioning and educative role *only* if they are publicly perceived as legitimate. The matter of legitimacy is also raised in another context, stressing the need for the popular acceptance of the processes and interim institutions of transition to enhance the legitimacy of the eventual constitutional product. Contemporary transition literature underlines the importance of this relationship between process and product.

From such a perspective, the debates and institutions driving the official transition process raise several questions about the prospects of successful democratic consolidation in South Africa. The main protagonists' apparent preoccupation with their own strategic interests seems to have alienated a significant portion of the mass public who are experiencing the negotiation process as an elite pursuit of power.

For many ordinary people there appears to be an overriding elitist interest in mechanisms and formulae for allocating power to future rulers, that reduces the securing of democratic rights for citizens - *vis-à-vis* such rulers - to secondary issues.

It is felt that if negotiators were interested in citizen rights as a democratic priority, the debate would have focused on preventing the *abuse* of power rather than concentrating on its *division*. The bitter arguments would have been about means and mechanisms for enhancing administrative efficiency and accountability, and the removal of corrupt officials from power, instead of fighting about access to lucrative sites of power.

If official transition agencies such as Codesa or its successor(s) prioritised citizens' issues, and were perceived by the mass public to deal directly with their interests as citizens, ordinary people would feel less alienated from the transition process. An improved sense of belonging is likely to enhance the popular legitimacy both of the transition process and its products, thereby improving the stabilising conditions for a future democracy.

Further questions relating to the problem of legitimacy in South Africa can be raised. For instance, would the negotiating parties, as a *collective*, be able to reach compromises 'acceptable to the bulk of the populace?' That is, can they negotiate deals that comprise the lesser of evils in general, and satisfy no-one in particular, and still make them stick?

Moreover, it can be asked whether the main negotiating parties, *individually*, are able to sell the inevitable compromises of negotiation politics to their respective constituencies. And this is of critical importance, because the collective of negotiators would be incapacitated if any of its major constituent parts were rendered powerless.

Thus, the particular generational difficulties that appear to plague the ANC and its allies pose a serious transition problem in general. For if the opposition alliance cannot negotiate on behalf of its militant youth (which is likely to constitute a sizeable chunk of the 'bulk of the populace' in the near future), both today's processes and tomorrow's products are likely to suffer a perilous lack of legitimacy.

Just as it is necessary to lock influential rightwingers in to the transition process to give negotiated compromises a broader legitimacy, so it seems crucial to engage the black youth — either by extracting a mandate from them for the existing leadership to negotiate at their behest, or by letting them represent themselves directly in the talks. Alternatively, this question could be settled by a referendum.

Du Plessis explicitly acknowledges the enormous difficulties in devising a constitutional framework for a reasonably peaceful and orderly South Africa. In fact, his proposals are premised on the awareness of the profound cleavages, intolerance, and unabating violence that exist, and the need to overcome 'political over-excitement' and 'utopian material expectations'.

However, it is precisely this realistic recognition of difficulties — and the initial promise it creates — that eventually makes the chapter fall short of expectations. It raised the prospect of a clear set of practical proposals ('means and mechanisms') to deal with the problem of democracy in a hostile political environment. For this reason the tendency to formulate proposals mainly in general normative terms, seems inadequate as a response to the question about the constitutional, legal and institutional bases of democratic government in South Africa.

REFERENCES

BOULLE, L. J. 1984. *South Africa and the consociational option.* Cape Town: Juta.

SCHMITTER, P. & KARL, T. L. 1991. What democracy is ... and is not. *Journal of Democracy*, 2(3).

STAATKUNDIGE ONTWIKKELINGSDIENS 1993. Werksdokument. *Regstellende Aksie.* April. (Ongepubliseer.)

CHAPTER 11

From apartheid to *liberal* democracy

Robert Mattes

THE QUEST FOR *LIBERAL* DEMOCRACY

The pre-eminent and enduring aspiration of the struggle against apartheid has undoubtedly been the realisation of democracy and majority rule. But South Africans need to ask themselves the question: 'why democracy?' Should democracy, in and of itself, be *the* goal of the liberation struggle? Is it something to be valued as an end in itself, or does democracy's significance result from the fact that it helps secure *other*, more important human goals? I shall argue that democracy is not enough and does not constitute the political heaven. In and of itself, democracy is actually of limited value; it is a set of procedures and mechanisms by which a group of people make collective decisions. Democracy is the *way* in which we should govern ourselves or to *what ends*, but it does not tell us *why* we should govern ourselves. It provides us with an indispensable set of *means* to conduct politics, but it should not be the *end* of political life.

To achieve democracy in the absence of other crucial political goals would be to win a hollow victory. The South African transition must be about something beyond — and probably something other than — achieving majority rule. South Africans rather should strive for democracy because it helps them secure *other* things, things which in fact are largely associated with the values cherished by classical liberal political philosophy. More specifically, classical liberalism implies a set of principles, procedures and mechanisms designed to guarantee individual freedom. To be sure, freedom has also been a principal theme of the liberation movement. Yet this vision of freedom has usually operated on a societal or communal level and has largely meant throwing off the yolk of apartheid oppression and inequality. But freedom does not only consist of the absence of oppression (that would be like saying that peace is the absence of war — peace includes that but also much more, such as diplomacy, mutual cooperation, trade and intercourse). In the same way, individual political freedom also means the opportunity of participating in and influencing the very processes which constitute political freedom.

In order to achieve this type of freedom within the new South African political community, democracy is a necessary but not sufficient condition. But there are several other values normally associated in present political discourse with both democracy and freedom, but which are actually derived from and required by liberalism, not democratism.[1] Thus, in order to advance political freedom, democracy must be joined with liberalism; both philosophically and institutionally, the goal of the South African transition should not be democracy, but *liberal* democracy. Liberal democracy protects human dignity by allowing us to govern ourselves as a community. It protects our rights and freedoms not just with a bill of rights but by the very working of the political system itself.

Significantly, the negotiations process does appear to be pushing the eventual constitutional agreement ever closer to liberal democracy.[2] However, the new South African political dispensation is, and has been, overwhelmingly advertised to the mass public as promising democracy, not liberal democracy. The difference here is not semantic. Any widespread perception on the part of the mass public of a disjuncture between reality and promise may have an extremely damaging effect on the legitimacy of the new and fragile political system. This calls for a substantial effort to persuade people of the values and virtues of liberal democracy.

NECESSITY OF DEMOCRACY

Why should we govern ourselves, rather than be governed by others? The answer to this question comes from liberalism, not democratism. The classical liberal political philosophies of Thomas Hobbes and John Locke stem from what Abraham Lincoln called 'the proposition that all men are created equal'. It is our equal creation by God which tells us that we are autonomous moral agents with worth and dignity and, therefore, deserve to govern ourselves.[3] This fundamental liberal insight also answers the question of *how* a community of equal individuals should govern itself. If all citizens are equal, fairness dictates that the only way to make a collective, binding decision is to count everyone equally and let the majority (or plurality) prevail. This provides the principal philosophical basis of majoritarian approaches to democracy. It should be noted, however, that majoritarian democracy is also based on a less principled, more pragmatic recognition of brute reality; on average 51 people can beat up 49. In this sense, majoritarianism is only a civilised replacement for mob violence.

LIMITATIONS OF MAJORITARIAN DEMOCRACY

What it doesn't give us

Thus, majoritarian democracy is based upon expedience and fairness. But it is crucial to note what it is *not* based upon; it is not based on any other possible rationale which could be used to legitimate authority such as virtue, knowledge, wisdom or benevolence. Obviously, there is no necessary relationship between such values and the minority/majority status of any group, or support for any policy. There is no self-evident reason why majorities should be any wiser, more virtuous or less oppressive than minorities.[4] This implies that while majorities should be allowed to decide, this right can and should be qualified.

And as a system of ideas, democratism also begs many crucial questions which are implied by its basic axiom. As Andre du Toit (1993:3-6) points out, the initial premise that 'the people shall govern' automatically invites subsequent questions such as: 'who are the people?', 'how should they govern?', and 'over what shall the people have power?'. The important point is that we must go beyond democracy to find answers to these queries. Significantly, many answers to these questions (usually associated with democracy in everyday political discourse) are, strictly speaking, derived not from democratism, but from liberalism. Values such as limited government, checks and balances, separation of powers, a bill of rights and constitutionalism do not necessarily have anything to do with giving power to the people, and may actually be used to limit the power of apparent popular majorities.

Constitutionalism

For instance, constitutionalism, a bill of rights, and the rule of law are now ritualistically cited as crucial elements in any future democratic dispensation. However, these important values derive from liberalism, not democratism. Strictly speaking, constitutionalism can often be anti-democratic in the sense that it assumes the presence of some authority, discoverable by reason, higher than the popular will (what Locke and Thomas Jefferson called the Natural Law). These principles are embodied in a constitution as a check on human avarice and passion. This assumes that certain individual rights precede democracy and cannot be taken away regardless of the size of the majority wishing to do so (in short, they are what Jefferson called 'inalienable').

Limited government

Democratism does not require a limited government or state; democrats may be quite comfortable giving the state as much power as possible so long as it acts in the people's name and under their control. In contrast, liberalism is based on a suspicion of all forms of authority and power and is well characterised by Lord Acton's famous saying that: 'Power tends to corrupt and absolute power corrupts absolutely.' Thus, as a form of authority and power, the state is a necessary evil to be limited.[5] This suspicion extends to the democratic state as well. While classical liberalism is also based on an optimism about the individual capacity to reason, it does not and cannot maintain that people are *always* the best judges of their own self-interest (only nineteenth-century English utilitarians attempt this). This means that the aggregated will of the people or the decisions of their elected leaders will not always be based upon reason, and not always be in the best interests of citizens or the community. Thus, the democratic state (as with any other type) is a necessarily flawed decision-maker whose incompetencies should be limited so as not to do too much damage.

Yet here we see, again, how democracy actually promotes liberal values; elections and the threat of re-election become one way of limiting the power of the state and guarding against tyranny. Democracy is also chosen not because we are the best judges of our own self-interest, but because we deserve to be treated *as if* we were. As Peter Collins (1992:97) has argued, not to do so (that is, non-democratic government) would 'relegate [citizens] to a condition of permanent moral infantility'. Democracy 'uniquely accords with their dignity as moral agents, that is, as fully-fledged persons and not as children or animals or mere things'. And finally, democracy is chosen because liberals have no faith in any other basis of government, such as enlightened dictatorship. In this respect, democracy is seen as the best of a lousy set of options, echoing Churchill's quip that it 'is the worst of all forms of government, except for all the others'.

The myths of majoritarianism

Elections offer an interesting and thorny problem for liberals. They are a double-edged sword in that while they may remove oppressive and incompetent leaders, or keep them honest under the threat of future defeat, they may also create a new form of suspicious power and authority called the 'majority'.[6] This lays the ground for a most seductive and pernicious myth that since the democratic state operates according to the people's (or the majority's) will, it can be trusted with and given substantial powers. However, the liberal suspicion of the democratic state accords well with what social science tells us about the logical possibilities of majoritarianism.[7] The suspicion is not only that apparent popular majorities can simply be wrong or plain oppressive, but also that they are tenuous and ephemeral and when cobbled together in the form of an election, referendum or public opinion poll results, create a false source of legitimacy (and hence power) for leaders and political parties (see Madison, Hamilton & Jay 1961 and Schumpeter 1987).

Elections, referenda and opinion polls may produce the appearance of majorities. However, social choice theory tells us that there is no completely fair and consistent way by which majorities may choose candidates or policies. As long as there are more than two alternatives (and binary choices rarely arise naturally in politics) and as long as citizens have a range of preferences across those choices, *different* methods of collecting and aggregating popular choice, when applied to the *same* set of popular preferences, can result in *different* outcomes. More importantly, we have no objective way to determine which results are more valid than the other (Riker 1982).

Thus, the majorities (or pluralities) emanating from any election, referenda, or opinion poll will almost always be, at least partially, a function of the counting and aggregating system. Thus, it is not possible to make government policy and public law reflect 'the will of the people'.[8] Regardless of its rhetorical claims the democratic state cannot and never will operate in our name. There never will be a direct, literal translation of popular will into public policy and law, as the populists have so long hoped for. The claim to represent and respond to 'the people' or 'the majority' or 'the democratic majority' is only a way for leaders and political parties to tap undeserved political power from the legitimacy created by the apparent mandate (see Schumpeter 1987 & Ginsberg 1986).

This has significant implications for the role of elections. Populist democrats have always taken a plebiscitarian view of elections whereby the popular will is transmitted to the government in the form of a mandate. In contrast, liberal democrats see elections simply as authorising agents of the community. They do not register the will of the people or give any specific mandate; rather they are simply a device for selecting qualified leaders and then keeping them honest through the threat of re-election. Where populist democrats say that government should be based on the will of the people, liberal democrats say it need only be based on popular consent. Thus, as James Madison (Madison, Hamilton & Jay 1961) argued, it is necessary for officials to be popularly selected, and it is sufficient for this to be done on a regular basis with fixed terms of office. But election results do not have to 'mean' anything in terms of policy guidance or mandates (Riker 1982, Chapter 1). This leads us back to the necessity for a limited state; if elected leaders are given permission by us to do what they see fit (given their constitutionally specified powers), rather than directions by us to do certain things, we should give them a rather narrow scope of manoeuvrability.

Separation of powers and federalism

Almost all South Africans (including the ANC and the NP) say they favour a separation of powers.[9] Yet the separation of powers is also a liberal concept rather than a democratic one. It is a key way of limiting the democratic state and the putative ruling majority by dividing and separating power and authority between the branches of government. Federalism is not necessarily antidemocratic; in fact, it is often argued that by devolving power and responsibility to smaller political units, it increases democracy by bringing key government decisions closer to the people. Federalism, however, can be seen to be antimajoritarian in the sense that it may frustrate the will of the apparent national majority, or national ruling party. In this sense, the central conflict in the current federal *vs* unitary debate is not whether South Africa will be democratic, but the identity/ies of 'the people': will there be one, or many? Federalism and separation of powers create several 'peoples'. The existence of one apparent 'people' (or 'majority') gives great political power to the institution which represents it and the political party which dominates that institution (for example the ANC in a unicameral national assembly in a unitary South Africa). But once you start creating other popularly selected institutions (such as a president, or a senate, or regional executives and legislatures) you create many 'peoples' and disperse power, authority and legitimacy. Even if the same political party emerged victorious across all levels and branches of government, diverse institutional interests would still work to prevent the centralisation of power.

Self-government rather than majority rule

Thus, a truly liberal democratic approach sees democracy only as a decision-making *mechanism* or set of *procedures* which enable the community of equal South African citizens to govern themselves. Rather than majority rule, the goal should be to achieve a framework in which all South Africans, as a community, participate in self-government.[10] Viewing liberal democracy as self-government rather than majority rule enables us to see politics as more than a clash of interests or an imposition of aggregated wills or preferences. The essential question becomes not whether the majority is able to rule, but how the community governs itself; how are deliberation, discussion and reflective choice built into the political system?

It is important to note that separation of powers and federalism are not designed to preclude popular influence over government;[11] rather, they are designed to create a popularly based government that does not have to trace its power to some specific popular majority. Thus, the authority of government institutions flows out of the powers duly assigned to them by the constitution, and not from the size of the electorate which put it into office. By dividing and separating power, we come closer to a situation whereby a diverse community may govern itself. Government and the state do not become mechanisms to reflect the prevailing balance of power and translate the interests of the stronger into law, but to make sure that the deliberate sense of the community prevails. Separation of powers and federalism also work to ensure that popular influence is more considered rather than based on momentary passion and whim.

Complicating factors

Besides the fact that many values often associated with democracy actually stem from liberalism, the liberal assertion of fundamental equality yields other implications which can serve to further complicate and conflict with majoritarianism. For example, if everyone is equal, there is no way for any individual (or group of individuals, such as 'the majority') to tell anyone else what to do or think, or how to act.[12] And if all citizens are equal, it can be argued that there is no basis by which to countenance unequal opportunities, or even grossly iniquitous outcomes, or possibly even *any* differences of condition.[13] To see how these other deductions from equality complicate and even neutralise majoritarianism, consider the implications of the following situations: where a majority freely elects to limit the freedom of some subset of the population; where the pursuit of individual happiness violates the deeply held preferences of a majority; where policies supported by a majority result in severe economic or social inequality for a minority; or, where policies designed to promote social harmony or minority advancement are actively opposed by the majority.

OBSTACLES TO SOUTH AFRICAN LIBERAL DEMOCRACY

Yet while self-interest has pulled the NP and the ANC in the direction of a liberal democratic settlement, there is no guarantee that they will finally arrive there. Liberalism has yet to take root in many sectors of South African society. To take one example, the recent hearings to nominate the new SABC board were remarkable if only for the fact that not one nominee even suggested that there should *not* be an SABC board and that broadcasting (at least news services) be separated from the state.

The transitional power-sharing arrangement arrived at by the ANC and the NP is only the most obvious sign that they would happily stop short of liberal democracy. The NP had to be dragged kicking and screaming away from its notion of an ethnically defined, group-oriented view of constitutionalism. It would only too gladly carry on its plan for interim power-sharing in perpetuity if it could. On the other hand, the ANC is still committed to a system in which the party receiving the majority of votes (presumably themselves) runs the entire government and state, though with some protection for minorities in the Bill of Rights. And, on occasion, they still exhibit hostility to the idea of courts being able to check a popular legislature (as seen in their opposition to allowing a court to overrule decisions of the Constituent Assembly). The ANC also had to be pressured to delegate real powers, not just functions to regions, and still refuses to use the word 'federalism'. They were more than willing to allow regional powers to be determined by a unitary Constituent Assembly.[14] And finally, what will prevent a popularly elected Constituent Assembly (most of whose delegates will be highly imbued with populist and majoritarian notions of government) from simply throwing out the fine, liberal democratic principles laid down at Kempton Park?

I briefly want to examine three key obstacles in the general movement toward liberal democracy.

Federalism

Currently negotiated constitutional principles do provide for regional/provincial legislatures and executives with exclusive and concurrent powers entrenched in the national constitution. The national government will not be able to alter these powers except by obtaining specified majorities of regional legislatures or of a regionally composed national senate, as well as the assent of any specifically affected regions.[15] However, a series of other 'elastic' clauses leave much room for national dominance. For instance, the national government will be able to intervene in regional/provincial affairs in order to maintain national standards, economic unity and prevent 'unreasonable' actions prejudicial to any other region or the whole country. The national government will also have final powers to impose uniformity and minimum standards on regions to protect the common market. Significantly, it will presumably be up to national institutions to decide when any of these situations has occurred.[16]

Separation of powers

I mentioned earlier that separation of powers has become almost a 'motherhood' issue in the South African negotiations. Yet significantly, no set of current constitutional proposals has yet come close to operationalising the fundamental principal of separation of powers. Most achieve only a division of functions rather than any real separation of powers. The essential element of separation of powers comes from a chief executive officer/s who is elected separately from the legislature, as well as having separate powers assigned to each branch by the constitution. However, in virtually all current proposals, the executive is selected by the legislature. Thus political power flows from the legislative election and, as in all parliamentary systems, comes to rest in the majority party caucus and cabinet.

From proportional representation to proportional influence

If liberal democracy refers to the procedures by which a community governs itself, and by which the deliberate sense of the entire community prevails, *all* parts of the South African community need to play a role in the governing process. The logic of proportional representation accords well with this principle. Yet we are interested in *influence*, not just representation. Proportional representation bears no necessary relationship to proportional influence. As long as a parliament is dominated by a solid, well-disciplined majority party (or coalition), a DP with 4 per cent of the seats, or a PAC with 8 per cent, would have no more real legislative influence than that of H. F. Verwoerd's 'toy telephone' Bantu councils.

But minorities must have influence, though not grossly disproportionate to their electoral strength. This is where the separation of powers comes in. By giving the executive a separate power base, the stability and survival of 'the government' is no longer dependent upon every vote in the legislature. This will enable various regional and ideological factions within the various parties in the legislature to more naturally represent their constituencies and occasionally vote against the party leadership. Thus, in order for party leaders to pass legislation, it will become necessary to build cross-partisan coalitions on certain broad types of legislation. These coalitions may shift depending upon whether the vote is on social (for example abortion), redistributive (for example an 'apartheid tax'), or national security (for example national service) legislation.

A true separation of powers, along with federalism, would have several salutary effects. Most importantly, individuals and groups from across the South African community would have greater ability to access and influence government or, to participate in self-government. Key decisions will be brought closer to popular influence. Depending upon the relative size of the majority party or coalition, smaller parties can have continuing influence in the legislative process. The increased freedom for members to vote against the party line will enable them to represent their constituencies better. This will also help individuals and groups protect their rights and interests, not just through the Bill of Rights and the courts, but by the very workings of constitutional self-government. The combination of federalism and separation of powers creates multiple points of access which, in turn, create incentives for the proliferation of organisations of civil society (that is, civics and interest groups). This empowers individuals and groups to use the political system to protect their own rights and press their demands. And finally, the freedom to abandon party leadership and the resulting necessity for party leaders to forge coalitions across party lines will increase the compromise and fluidity that is so often called for in the new South African political system.[17]

It is imperative to note that 'proportional influence' should not be confused with power-sharing. The illiberal and contrived cabinet coalitions of consociational power-sharing bring influence only to certain minority parties which are, at present, best positioned to negotiate a share of the political pie (that is, the NP). Power will still be institutionally centralised in the cabinet and thus will create fewer incentives for groups to organise and lobby government. Where legislative compromises are much more amenable to public scrutiny, cabinet compromises are much more likely to be the province of a secretive elite cartel of government ministers. Finally, it would tend to freeze partisan (and hence, ethnic) lines, rather than encourage fluidity and the creation of cross-cutting social and political cleavages which would help bind the community and would aid in the process of nation-building.

THE LIBERAL DEMOCRATIC STRUGGLE IN SOUTH AFRICA

Thus, I have argued that liberal democracy should, both philosophically and institutionally, be the goal of the South African transition. Significantly, the current negotiations process, with some important exceptions, seems to be moving in precisely this direction. Yet, the prevailing ethos under which the new South African constitutional dispensation has been and is being 'sold' to the mass public is democracy. However, I have outlined several different types of situations in which the working of liberal democracy could be seen to thwart the perceived will of the apparent majority, and thus be seen to frustrate democracy. This creates the potential for significant tension. The perception by citizens (led to expect that the 'democratic majority' would come to power) that they have been misled may threaten the new and fragile political system. This creates the imperative to persuade South Africans of the benefit and necessity of liberal democracy.

However, to argue aggressively for liberal democracy in South Africa is a risky proposition. To begin with, it opens you up to the criticism of 'insensitivity' by attempting to impose 'foreign models' on African society and ignoring indigenous political traditions.[18] Yet liberalism needs to refrain from shrinking in front of the altar of cultural relativism and decide whether individual freedom is one of those values that holds only for certain peoples at certain times,[19] or whether it constitutes a universal human right. Certainly, the debate about culturally and ideologically relative forms of democracy has ended with the consensus that elections are necessary regardless of culture. Why not the same for individual freedom?

However, liberal democracy will not prevail through fortuity. Liberals need to put forward their own view of human freedom, as well as persuade the mass public that such freedoms are relevant to them. Thus, liberal democratism needs to be seen as idealistic and heroic. It also needs to be an aggressive and inherently political movement. Unfortunately, South African liberalism may not have many advocates willing to struggle via politics. As a movement, it tends to be almost apolitical and above the political fray. The desire to keep one's hands clean of the sludge of everyday politics oozes forth every time you hear a liberal sniff that eminently peculiar (and redundant) phrase, 'party-political'. Ironically, the liberal distrust of power cannot translate into a refusal to seek power or participate in power politics.[20]

Earlier in this volume, Lourens du Plessis (Chapter 9) writes that 'The means and mechanisms warranting constitutionalism will have to be accepted by the bulk of the population as theirs. This implies that they will have to be perceived (and experienced) as democratic ...' But 'education for democracy' is not enough. What will happen if we teach principles such as tolerance, civil liberties, and minority rights without enlightening people about the liberal rationale underlying them, and these rights are then used to frustrate the apparent will of the people (and they probably will — that is often the purpose of individual rights, to act as a bulwark against others who, by virtue of their numbers, wish to take them away from you). Getting rights which may be non-democratic, and even anti-democratic, to be perceived as democratic may amount to squaring the circle. The real answer involves, and the survival of the forthcoming constitutional system depends upon, teaching people about liberalism and liberal democracy. We need to educate for liberal democracy.

NOTES

1. The term 'democratism' is taken from Peter Collins' recent book, *Ideology after the fall of communism.*
2. See editorial, 'The foundations of democracy', *Sunday Times,* 4 July 1993:20; and Ken Owen, 'Farewell to an ageing song-and-dance man', *Sunday Times,* 4 July 1993:20.
3. As Peter Collins (1992:47) has noted, if people are morally autonomous free agents who should be able to live their lives as they see fit, they ought to participate in how they are governed.
4. This constitutes the basis of Plato's attack on democracy in *The Republic.*
5. As journalist Simon Barber has observed: 'South Africa is not on the brink exclusively because a minority of its population systematically denied basic rights and opportunities to the majority. The question to ask is how did the minority do this. The answer is self-evident: by the massive and corrupt abuse of centralised state power under colour of law.' (See Simon Barber, 'Constitution's preamble more than a wordy production', *Cape Times,* 10 August 1993:6.)
6. The propensity for democracies to impute virtue and wisdom to majority opinion, and for that opinion to exercise tyrannical influence over individual judgement, was precisely the nightmare of Alexis de Tocqueville in *Democracy in America.* Benjamin Ginsberg has also argued that state power over citizens has expanded with the increasing democratic nature of the state. Citizens have willingly allowed democratic states to do things (such as imposing unheard-of rates of taxation) that would have

precipitated revolutions against monarchies in the belief that the state was acting in their name. See Ginsberg 1986.

7. For a full discussion of these myths, see Mattes 1992.

8. This resonates with Lawrence Schlemmer's recent description of what he calls 'mass democracy'.

   'Where a party in government has clear majority support, and most of the supporters are organised (especially within party structures), that government may purport to rule on the basis of mass consensus or collective sentiment. However, because a *mass* cannot articulate interests, nor participate in policy debates in any meaningful sense, political leaders and/or bureaucrats will end up deciding on what is good for the mass. The support of the "mass" is usually retained by implementing "populist" policies (subsidies, state welfare provision, minimum wage policies, etc. ...) which for a long while may keep the mass happy, even adoring, but will do little to promote critical participation in policy-making.

   'Such regimes can become effectively authoritarian, disguised by an aura of legitimacy and popularity. ... Because widespread participation inevitably produces conflicting inputs, it is easier and more efficient for elites to take the key decisions and keep the populace happy through songs, flag-waving and subsidies.'

   See Schlemmer 1993.

9. Both the NP's and the ANC's Declarations of Intent as the beginning of the Codesa process called for a 'separation of powers'. See 'We, the people', *Sunday Times* 15 December 1991. Principle 3 of the current constitutional principles negotiated by the Multiparty Forum calls for a separation of powers 'with appropriate checks and balances to ensure accountability, responsiveness and openness'. See '27 Principles to govern constitution', *Cape Times*, 27 August 1993:4.

10. Granted, several problems still lie ahead about how that community will be defined, and unfortunately, neither democratism nor liberalism gives us a way to solve that particular problem.

11. Though many admirers of Westminster parliamentarianism would certainly argue that the separation of powers does, since it is not always possible for voters to hold one party 'responsible' for the actions of government.

12. This forms the basis for the 'libertarian' tradition with liberalism.

13. This deduction provides the basis for egalitarianism, equalitarianism or social democratism, and possibly even socialism. The majoritarian, libertarian and equalitarian 'moments' or 'traditions' of liberalism may be seen as another way to reconceptualise the usual distinctions between first, second and third generation rights. The notion of 'generations' often implies some sort of priority, that some are more modern, or better than others. The notion of 'moments' or 'traditions' merely sees these types of rights as diferent traditions all stemming from the same liberal assertion of human equal creation and which need to be reconciled.

14. See Mervyn Frost, 'Doublespeak from ANC', *Sunday Times*, 26 March 1993:20.

15. Principles 15, 16, 17, 18 and 20; see '27 Principles to govern constitution', *Cape Times*, 27 July 1993:4.

16. Principles 24.3, 24.6, 24.7 and 24.8; see '27 Principles to govern constitution', *Cape Times*, 27 July 1993:4.

17. The beneficial effects of the separation of powers and federalism could be extended even further by staggering elections so that the entire system of office-holders was not elected simultaneously. However, the cost of elections for a country such as South Africa makes that prohibitive. It would also be useful it citizens could differentiate their vote between levels of government (rather than having the same party vote counted several different ways). But high rates of illiteracy pose significant obstacles to instructing voters which vote is intended for which level of government.

18. For this type of criticism of liberal models with regard to Africa, in general, see Owuzu 1992.

19. For an example of such a relativist view of democracy, see MacPherson 1965.

20. For a similar criticism of South African liberalism, see O'Malley 'Old foes haunt liberals', *Sunday Times*, 20 June 1993:22.

REFERENCES

COLLINS, Peter. 1992. *Ideology after the fall of communism*. London: Boyars/Bowerdean.

DU TOIT, Andre. 1993. The meaning of democracy. *Die Suid-Afrikaan*, February/March: 3-6. (Special 'Preparing for democracy' Focus.)

GINSBERG, B. 1986. *The captive public: how mass opinion promotes state power*. New York: Basic Books.

MacPHERSON, C. B. 1965. *The real world of democracy*. New York: Oxford University Press.

MADISON, James, HAMILTON, Alexander & JAY, John. 1961. *The federalist papers*. New York: New American Library.

MATTES, Robert B. 1992. The myths of majoritarianism. *Occasional Paper*, 43. Institute for a Democratic Alternative in South Africa.

OWUZU, Maxwell. 1992. Democracy and Africa: a view from the village. *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 30.

RIKER, William. 1982. *Liberalism against populism*. San Francisco: W. H. Freeman.

SCHLEMMER, Lawrence. 1993. *Societal interrelationships between political tolerance, multi-party democracy and development*. Paper presented to symposium on Political Tolerance in South Africa: Role of Opinion Makers and the Media, 30 July to 1 August, Cape Town.

SCHUMPETER, J. 1987. *Capitalism, socialism and democracy*. London: Allen and Unwin, 6th edition.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

CHAPTER 12

Steps toward the strategy of nation-building: response to Lourens du Plessis

Margot Pienaar

The classic concept of democracy on which Professor Du Plessis' chapter (see Chapter 9) is based is closely associated with societies such as those found in France, Britain, Germany, India, and the USA. The concept comprises a number of varieties, but is based on the idea that citizens are protected against the state through institutions such as checks and balances, a bill of rights, the courts, regular elections, and so forth. Generally these are considered to be the institutions of democratic government and the citizens of these particular states are regarded as enjoying a greater measure of human rights protection than citizens of those states which are built on differing constitutional bases. This fact alone is not a sufficient guarantee that the acceptance of these institutions as the constitutional and legal bases of democracy and nation-building will necessarily achieve the same results in South Africa. One need only consider the postindependence disaster in Nigeria, where a textbook-perfect constitution was drawn up by international experts. Since independence, Nigeria has experienced an attempted secession, several *coup d'etats*, corruption, and a number of military regimes.

Populist revolutions have repeatedly failed to achieve their goals in postcolonial times. These failures often include the replacement of one set of elites by another without any positive changes to the lives (both in terms of poverty and empowerment) of the people on the ground. This phenomenon tends to go hand in hand with gross violations of human rights by leaders whose *bona fides* appeared virtually impeccable before they came to power. Such violations are usually ascribed to the need to control social instability and economic insecurity. Yet social and economic rights suffer along with civil and political rights, a fact which tends to weaken this argument. Furthermore, the old debate on the trade-off between liberty and equality is too superficial an explanation for this behavioural phenomenon. The devising of a constitutional framework for democracy clearly requires more than a theoretically 'good' constitution, and the debate surrounding it should be broadened in order to encompass the search for the added dimension which is required in order to avoid the path followed by states such as Nigeria.

What must be done in order to build a nation on the bases of democratic government in a society which is divided along economic, social, cultural and ideological lines? The discussion by Professor Du Plessis proposes certain formal institutions of democratic government as being the appropriate constitutional bases for nation-building in South Africa. In taking the institutionalist approach to offering pointers for nation-building in the formal constitutional sphere, it is necessary to bear in mind that there is another hidden institution which more than any other, perhaps, determines the success or failure of the constitutional and legal bases of democratic government referred to above. This hidden institution consists of the repetitive patterns of behaviour which exist in every society and have played a definitive role in determining the success or failure of fledgling democratic governments in the past.

Professor Du Plessis' chapter which is based on the assumption that 'the optimum protection and accommodation of basic human rights and civil liberties are preconditions to optimum democracy', leads one to the obvious conclusion that a common ground between differing approaches to human rights and their implementation should be established. In considering the role of constitutional and legal institutions as the bases of nation-building, it is clear that a reconciliation of the differing approaches to human rights is required. If such a reconciliation does not occur in such a manner as to lead to the alteration of past behaviour patterns, however, it is not likely to result in 'optimum democracy'. This assumption is based on the simple notion that since the behaviour of the apartheid past was not conducive to human rights or nation-building, such behaviour should be altered.

Professor Du Plessis states that '... democracy is meaningful only if it is not just institutionalised ... "on the formal level" ... but also actively practised' on the informal level. It is important to recognise that formal institutions are dependent on informal behavioural institutions for their functioning. Behaviour is an informal institution, and the practice of democracy (both formally and informally) is a kind of behaviour. Thus the institutionalisation of democracy requires a change to the institutionalised behaviour of intolerance and apartheid.

While the constitutional bases of democratic government are institutional structures, the aspiration of democracy is surely the ordering of society according to the needs and wishes of its members, as this constitutes the basis of democracy. In the same way, the purpose of including a bill of rights in the constitution is to ensure the actual effecting of the enjoyment of human rights in society. The constitutional bases of democratic government are considered to be the guarantees that those needs and wishes will be respected and implemented. Yet when newly elected governments with the best of intentions are democratically mandated to bring about change, they often fail to use state power *effectively* in order to do so. They fail to create economic, political, and social change in the institutions of their specific societies. It is submitted that such new states have failed sufficiently to identify, address and alter the repetitive patterns of behaviour which operated before independence.

The bare promulgation of a constitution and bill of rights such as that discussed by Professor Du Plessis will not alter behaviour. The mere written constitution and bill of rights will prove to be a paper tiger in terms of orienting behaviour toward tolerance and nation-building. The true test of the 'tiger' will depend on the manner in which the democratically elected parliament or congress passes ordinary legislation, the manner in which it is implemented by the branches of government and the manner in which both the promulgation and implementation is interpreted by the courts. In this regard, it is essential that these governmental activities do not occur in isolation from those whose behaviour is being addressed. This implies more than the need for broad consultation and that the process should not be veiled in an air of secrecy.

The primary requirement as regards the successful alteration of the repetitive patterns of behaviour of the past, is the political will to do so. Once the political will has been established, then the old adage that 'the road to hell is paved with good intentions' comes into play. The interplay between the government and vested interests as well as the approach taken to addressing the behaviour of the past is important to the success or failure thereof. It is submitted that the most appropriate approach that could be taken to altering behaviour would be one which does not allow the bill of rights to be sidestepped in the private sphere. Disagreement as to the acceptability of this approach emanates from the differing perceived consequences thereof, and is a primary source of the conflicting approaches to the content and implementation of a bill of rights as described by Professor Du Plessis. As a result, the constitutional debate surrounding reconciliation and nation-building tends to be confined to issues such as federalism, consociationalism, and the extent to which social and economic rights will be recognised as (unenforceable) guidelines for state action.

Within the South African context, the repetitive patterns of behaviour of the institution of apartheid stifle the thinking of the constitution-makers/problem solvers through the assumption that people will continue to behave as they have done in the past. This has dual consequences as regards the content and implementation of the future constitution and bill of rights. On the one hand, vested interests are in support of a bill of rights on the assumption that people will do as has been done unto them, or to put it differently, that those in certain positions will behave in much the same way as their predecessors have. On the other hand, any threat to vested privileges and established behavioural patterns by a bill of rights is considered unacceptable by such interest groups and is resisted by them. This resistance is in itself a type of behaviour — a pattern of behaviour which specifically militates against the 'horizontal' implementation of the bill of rights as between the members of the nation which is to be built, and leans toward using the bill of rights as a means to entrench the *status quo*. It does so by insisting on the application of the archaic theory that a bill of rights operates vertically only, for example, as between the state and the people, and not between the people *inter se*. In South Africa, and in the context of employing constitutional and legal means as the bases of the stated goal of nation-building, this 'vertical' approach cannot possibly begin to address the repetitive patterns of behaviour which constituted apartheid and divided the nation.

While space does not permit a detailed description or catalogue of the behaviours of apartheid, two broad examples will suffice to indicate the validity of the above point. The first example is that of the patterns of racist behaviour which were institutionalised formally on the statute books by the state and practised informally by the people. The second, which arises naturally from the first, is the entrenched patterns of social and economic inequalities which have been created along racial divisions and are a consequence thereof. The 'vertical' interpretation of a bill of rights would permit private racial discrimination and provide the legal basis with which to avoid the redistribution of wealth and land which are required to alter the abovementioned inequalities through the implementation of basic social and economic human rights.

In terms of the concept of *Drittwirkung* which is mentioned by Professor Du Plessis, the state is required to ensure the horizontal implementation of human rights as between citizens. This concept is rejected by those groups which consider its inclusion to be hazardous to their vested interests and their entrenched behavioural patterns. Without the inclusion of this type of concept in a bill of rights, the apartheid patterns of behaviour, while removed from the public sphere of government, will simply remain as they are within the private sphere. To provide an effective basis for nation-building, the constitution should therefore provide for the horizontal operation of the bill of rights so that the unjust behaviours of the past can be more effectively addressed by subordinate legislation.

Even if the horizontal operation of the bill of rights were provided for, however, it would merely be the tip of the iceberg as far as real action in addressing the unjust behaviour of the apartheid past is concerned. A bill of rights is necessarily vague. It does not contain the details which are required in order to address a specific situation. More detailed legislation in the form of an assortment of Civil Rights Acts will be essential to the alteration of behaviour. The bill of rights can merely provide normative guidelines for the policy which precedes a piece of parliamentary legislation which in turn must be interpreted by the courts and the legislature.

A government mandated to address injustices can do so through laws which are subordinate to the bill of rights and comply with its norms. States operate through law, and accordingly implement policy through law. The failure to achieve successful democratic government can therefore be ascribed at least partially to the failure to use the (entire) legal order *effectively*, for example all rules and regulations, including normative rules. The legal order simultaneously addresses the behaviour of a variety of 'role occupants'. These are both the constituents of the divisions from which a nation must be built, and the agencies which are expected to implement laws through appropriate measures/sanctions. In this regard it should also be remembered that there is a vast gap between the interests and ideologies of the cabinet minister and the junior civil servant who deals with the public, and that this should be taken into account in considering mechanisms for the implementation of any particular act.

If one considers Barth's insight that in terms of existing law, people (in whatever capacity) behave in the face of the prescriptions of existing law as well as other factors in their environment, then one must recognise that changes in the law which do not address behavioural institutions, will have a negative effect on any hoped for results. The possibilities and methodologies for altering past behaviours must be addressed. Professor Du Plessis describes in broad terms the kind of behaviour which would be manifested by the successful implementation of constitution/rights based nation-building (for example tolerance). His discussion centres on the identifying features and norms of a constitutional framework based on human rights standards. He concludes with a description of the criteria for the required behaviour through his discussion of 'what constitutionalism in South Africa could and should aim to achieve'.

There are many behaviours which constitute the apartheid system. Such behaviours can be immediately identified through the images which are evoked through the word *apartheid*. They are mostly related to injustice in some form or another. To change behaviour, it is necessary to change the *norms* of behaviour. Governments are in a position to do so by changing the law which is based on norms. As stated above, the reason for the failure of democracy in post-colonial countries is that although the governments changed, institutions such as behaviour did not change. There is no institution which is not governed by some kind of law, whether formal or informal. South Africa today is defined by specific repetitive patterns of behaviour/institutions which govern the functioning of society. These are linked to the legal system.

The first stage in the process of legislation is the formulation of policy. Policy is as vague as a bill of rights, and cannot be directly translated into concrete legislation which can be effectively implemented. If one considers that the law operates in a kind of holistic chaos, that is, unpredictable cause and effect, it is also necessary to provide for feedback and amendments. The policy chosen must be capable of translation into a law which can be implemented. If it is difficult to implement, then it is not a good law, even though its stated intention is entirely laudable. In this regard, it is important to recognise that the role both in terms of inputs and outputs that can be played by various Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) which are in daily contact with 'ordinary people', can be invaluable to the effective implementation of behaviour-altering laws.

The question then becomes one of how to move from policy to law. It is always tempting to copy a model from another jurisdiction. The USA and Germany are often presented as being worthwhile examples, and the Indian model is particularly tempting due to the similarities between South African and Indian socioeconomic problems. It would be a mistake to copy them. This applies to the copying of ordinary legislation as well as the constitution and bill of rights by which ordinary legislation is informed. The process of creating legislation is important if it is to transform repetitive patterns of behaviour such as human rights abuse. It is necessary to understand the behaviour in order to identify the *rules* which should be altered, for example the content of the legislation which should be passed in order to change the repetitive patterns of behaviour of the past. It is in the approach taken to the drafting of these rules or laws that one aspect of the legal basis of democratic government comes into play.

The limitations and resources of a specific environment are extremely relevant to the content of any law, and should be factored into the equation. Changing the institution of apartheid behaviour in South Africa through the law should thus be directed at specific South African circumstances. In terms of an appropriate approach to creating effective legislation, the 'mischief rule' of statutory interpretation provides a useful pointer by suggesting that it is the mischief to be addressed that should be examined more closely. It requires an interdisciplinary approach by the legislative researcher who commences his/her task armed only with the bill of rights and a policy memorandum from the government. Research would have to be done by sociologists, social workers, lawyers, economists, *et al.* In this regard, the participatory method of research is important, particularly in field research.* This approach depends on the attitude that the expert or researcher does not draw information from people in a technocratic manner, but can learn from the constituents to be addressed by a particular law. Another point to bear in mind is the observation made by Einstein that the act of observation changes the subject being observed, so that even the act of participatory research can lead to change. It is necessary for someone to start considering the possible approaches to the drafting of legislation as a *means* through which the behaviour of the practice of democracy described by Professor Du Plessis can be indeed achieved.

---

* For a detailed description of such a participatory research methodology, see Seidman, 'Justifying legislation: a pragmatic, Institutionalist approach to the memorandum of law, legislative theory, and practical reason', *Harvard Law Journal* 29(1), 1992.

CHAPTER 13

Majority rule and minority rights

Albie Sachs

Some people seem to think that the majority do not need rights, they have power. The way the debate proceeds, the only constitutional question worth pursuing in South Africa today is how to curb that power.

The implication is that majorities are always greedy, insensitive and grabbing, while minorities are made up of kindly folk simply wanting to be left to their own devices. Whatever the position might be in other parts of the world, South African experience has been just the opposite.

In South Africa it was the majority that was the minority. The minority behaved like an oppressive majority; the majority were treated like an oppressed minority. Little wonder that the Minority Rights Group in London gave its full support to the anti-apartheid movement, even though it was based on a struggle for the rights of a majority.

Thus, the majority in South Africa were at times and in some respects forced to assimilate, while at other moments and in other ways they were compelled to segregate. The forms of domination varied from epoch to epoch, but what they all had in common was a denial of choice to the majority and a refusal to allow the majority to speak for themselves in their own voice.

It was the minority that declared the majority to be inferior, that suppressed and falsified their history, that neglected their languages and distorted their customs, that took away their ancestral lands, that denied them civil rights, that sent their leaders to jail and pushed their members to the margins of the cities, the edges of the country and the backwaters of public life.

The beneficiaries of minority protection should therefore not be the victimising minority but the offended majority. Yet it simply cannot be correct that the only way the majority can achieve their just rights in South Africa is to declare themselves to be a minority.

The majority have struggled and suffered to achieve their rights. Now that, after decades of travail, they are about to be enfranchised, they are told that the suffrage they will be exercising ought not be have the same meaning as the one which the white minority has been enjoying all along.

One is not referring here to the difference between Parliamentary sovereignty and Parliament functioning within the framework of constitutional principles, but to mechanisms to deny the possibility of exercising majority rule within the restraining context of fundamental and inalienable rights.

The habits of dictation die hard. The minority rules, OK? It tries to set the agenda, to focus all attention on its own preoccupations and to build into the new constitution a capacity to block any movement towards achieving real equality. The justification advanced is that the minority needs special protection against domination.

Sometimes the argument extends the limits of irony. It is said that it is precisely because the minority behaved so badly in the past and because it has now become so rich as a result that it requires unusually strong safeguards for the future. Instead of focusing on how to eliminate injustice and its fruits, this approach seeks to put a shield around the past. The result is to rob the whole constitutional endeavour of its essentially moral foundation.

There are two equally incorrect ways of dealing with past injustice. One is to replace it with a new form of injustice; the other is to make it impermeable to correction. The appropriate manner, the one that not only is the most moral, but also has the greatest chance of succeeding, is to correct past injustice and to do so by means that are manifestly just.

This is where the constitution pays a vital role. It acknowledges the essential unity and equality of all South Africans, accepts that South Africa belongs to all who live in it, and establishes the rules, principles and mechanisms for ensuring that the fundamental rights of all are respected.

The essence of the matter is for the constitution to distinguish between legitimate safeguards against abuse, on the one hand, and unjustified protection of privileged status, on the other.

PREVENTING DOMINATION

Majority rule always involves domination in the limited technical sense that after having had its say, the minority, is obliged to cede to the will of the majority. That is what elections and voting in Parliament are all about. As long as laws required the consent of the majority and as long as laws must be obeyed, we can say that democracy implies the domination of the minority by the majority.

The minority cannot claim, however, that there is something intrinsically unfair in the fact that they are fewer in number than the majority. Numerical discrepancy in electoral support is what distinguishes the two groups: it is not in itself a cause of complaint. Similarly, there is nothing inherently unjust or constitutionally inappropriate in the fact that there are more blacks than whites in South Africa or, for that matter, that because of past history there are more people likely to vote against the party at present in office than in its favour.

What the minority can legitimately seek protection against is being subject to abuse because they are in the minority. There are certain fundamental rights that all citizens should be able to enjoy and with which no government whether of the majority or the minority should be able to interfere. Fundamental rights can be quite extensive, and they can be of a kind that are enjoyed individually or collectively. They do not, however, include the right not to lose office if the party concerned loses elections.

Domination in the South African sense means suppression of the rights of the dominated group. It involves a colonial-type relationship in terms of which the dominated group is excluded from political rights and sees its land taken away and its culture denied.

No-one has more direct experience of domination in all its manifestations than the Afrikaans-speakers of the country: they have been dominated, they have dominated others, and they have perpetrated and been victims of domination in their own ranks.

In the sense that the term is used in South Africa ('oorheersing'), the new constitution must indeed be designed to avoid domination. If our country is ever to have peace, if ever there is to be a sense of unity among the people, if the creative capacities of all are at last to be set free, then the cycles of domination and subordination must be ended once and for all.

That is why we have negotiations: not to replace one form of domination with another, but to ensure that we move on to a new plane altogether in which domination is removed from the political scene.

Democracy and a bill of rights are the key to achieving this. Democracy is the solution; it is not the obstacle to be overcome. We cannot afford to equate majority rule with domination.

The majority in Parliament are entitled to pass laws for the peace and good government of the country. They have the right to take steps to improve the lives of their constituents. This is not domination; it is democracy.

What the majority seek to do is to overcome massive and structured disadvantage. This is not domination. They wish to be able to use their voting rights to produce legislation that will promote swift access to homes, jobs, schools and clinics. They look forward to enjoying equal facilities in relation to water, electricity and rubbish collection. They want to be free to use their languages and express their personalities, to feel that the country belongs to them as well as to everyone else. This is not domination. Insisting on equal protection and equal benefits does not constitute abuse of the rights of minorities. Taking orderly and principled steps to achieve equal life chances for all is not domination.

Claiming the right to live in the land of their birth not as temporary sojourners but as ancient inhabitants is not domination.

Advancement of the formerly oppressed is not an evil against which the constitution must offer protection, but rather a desirable outcome that the constitution should seek to promote.

In short, putting an end to 'baasskap' is not domination.

It is one thing to ask the majority to agree in advance to procedures that will allay anxieties and produce maximum national support for transition. It is quite another to dictate to the majority what the terms of the future constitution must be. Negotiations should not be about the fact of change but about its orderliness.

When people are free to exercise their rights, they are far more likely to be pragmatic and look to the broad national interest than when they are being told what to do.

With great generosity and common sense, the majority have indicated to the minority their willingness not to do unto the minority what the minority did unto them. The objective is to achieve the advancement of all without provoking the ruin of any.

This willingness — indeed, eagerness — to live in a united country where all enjoy equal rights and participate in equal citizenship is reflected in a series of concrete proposals at the constitutional level. These proposals take full account of the dangers represented by the potential for ethnic and racial mobilisation, but do not capitulate to them.

CHECKS AND BALANCES

Nothing could be more insensitive than to suggest that checks and balances were not needed when the African dimension was excluded from South Africa, but are required now that Africa is coming back.

The real problem in South Africa is not simple majoritarianism, which no-one is calling for, but simple anti-majoritarianism, which has any number of adherents, including (unfortunately) many in the highest reaches of university and government life.

In the South African context, simple anti-majoritarianism is normally little more than simple anti-blackism. If progress is to be made on the constitutional front, we have to distinguish it from principled and frequently complicated measures to prevent the abuse of any person, of any colour, by anyone, of any colour.

Checks and balances must indeed be inserted into the constitution. This is what constitutions are all about. Yet their objective is not to prevent the achievement of black advancement and equality. They are there to prevent abuse, to inhibit oppression; it is not their function to maintain inequality and to perpetuate social misery.

It is no good having all checks and no balance. We need checks and balances between the checks and balances. Elections must mean something, Majority support of the police must make a difference; the vote must really count.

The checks and balances are designed to ensure that majority rule functions in a fair and reasonable manner, not to ensure that majority rule is negated. It holds the structure of government together, gives it its legitimacy and authority, and acts as the centrepiece around which all the checks and balances are arranged.

In other words, the checks and balances are not arbitrarily designed and randomly located in order to further the interests of one party in the negotiation process. They are logically and strategically situated to give a sense of balance and rightness to majority rule.

DEMOCRACY: PROBLEM OR SOLUTION?

The one real question which underlies the debate, and which more than any other distinguishes the protagonists on different sides, is how to view the arrival of democracy. Is it an unavoidable calamity which, because of international pressure, can no longer be fought off, but which must be contained as much as possible? Or is it a long-overdue blessing which should be warmly embraced and nurtured with as much affection and care as possible?

Constraints imposed on democracy are counterproductive. There is no problem in getting majority assent to entrenched constitutional provisions which would prevent anyone in future from being subject to the kinds of abuses which they have experienced: forced removals, pass laws, job reservation, exclusion from the vote, invasion of the home, denial of language and cultural rights.

The majority express their will affirmatively in agreeing to be bound, together with all other South Africans, by a constitution which firmly entrenches fundamental human rights as universally understood. A bill of rights does not negate majority opinion; it expresses it. Overwhelmingly, South Africans seek the security and sense of dignity which a bill of rights brings.

What the majority reject are attempts to create constitutional mechanisms which will prevent future governments from tackling the inequalities and correcting the injustices created by the past. The paradox is that the more shackled and constrained the majority are, and the more they feel that a constitution is being imposed upon them not because it is just, but because the minority at the moment have superior firepower, the more they will be forced to assert their claims in an aggressive manner. The more, too, they will see themselves as a group destined to be in permanent opposition to the self-centred minority.

The freer they are and the freer they feel able to express their opinions, on the other hand, the greater will be their capacity to be pragmatic and magnanimous and the more favourable the prospects will be of their regarding themselves as part of a greater and inclusive South Africa.

There are any number of legitimate constitutional devices born out of international experience that are designed to promote democracy, good government and fairness in public life. The majority have no problem with these.

They are not based on the promise that somehow the whites are more intelligent, more civilised and more worthy of constitutional regard than the rest of the population. Nor do they reflect the corresponding view that because blacks will be voting for the first time, there must be special clauses in the constitution to protect the country against the outcome of elections.

The objective of these constitutional arrangements is not to eliminate or undermine majority rule but to ensure that majority rule is exercised in a principled and manifestly fair way.

What is needed, therefore, is a constitution built around concepts of achieving and defending freedom. The constitution must pay tribute to the longings for freedom of past generations, do honour to all those who have fought for freedom in our lifetime, and secure freedom for all the generations to come. Majority rule in conditions of guaranteed freedom is central to this constitutional endeavour.

A TEN-POINT PROGRAMME FOR MAJORITY RULE IN CONDITIONS OF FREEDOM

It is not necessary to invent strange and at times grotesque constitutional devices to protect minority rights in South Africa, when international experience has produced a number of perfectly good and acceptable ones. Ten such constitutional principles/mechanisms are listed below. Previously, each of the first five points would have been bitterly contested. Today they are all widely accepted; indeed, the main parties compete to prove who thought of them first.

Constitutionalism

Government is conducted in terms of powers and functions determined by an entrenched constitution, and not according to the whims or wishes of individuals or groups.

A separation of powers and a constitutional court

We have to have a separation of powers, with an entrenched constitution guarded over by a constitutional court. There is strong support for the view that in the final constitution the executive should be answerable to Parliament rather than that Parliament should be controlled or ignored by the executive.

An entrenched and enforceable bill of rights

It is right and necessary to encase majority rule in a bill of rights so that it cannot be used to oppress minorities, the majority or individuals. The right to govern is not the same as the right to oppress.

Guaranteed rights of political opposition

It is fundamentally important that the constitution guarantees political minorities the right to oppose and denounce the majority, and to campaign in regular, free and fair elections with a view to becoming the majority party.

Proportional representation

An electoral system based on proportional representation encourages a soft and dynamic form of pluralism in society and the formation of coalitions responsive to the public mood. Our country will need continuity of policies and what is sometimes called firm government, but this should be on the basis of consent, not compulsion. Elections must be meaningful, even decisive; they need to be fateful.

The next four points are surprisingly underdiscussed, but taken together constitute important means for acknowledging, even celebrating, the diversity of the country, and for ensuring that an open and non-oppressive society is created.

Entrenched language, cultural and religious rights

It is fit and proper that language, cultural and religious rights of the people — whether relating to minorities or majorities should be entrenched against being tampered with or ignored by the majority.

Constitutionalising the principle of equal protection

The constitution should lay down principles and procedures, first, to guarantee equal protection and equal benefits under the law, second, to ensure that there are appropriate mechanisms to guarantee antidiscrimination measures, and third, to provide that black advancement and affirmative action take place in a principled and orderly way.

Constitutionalised principles of good government

Openness, accountability, auditing of spending, performance and the free flow of information should all be built into the constitution as principles of good government, and appropriate mechanisms should be established to guarantee their existence. Judicial review of illegal and unfair governmental behaviour must always exist. An independent ombudsman must be available to attend to complaints against governmental officials.

A guaranteed role for organisations of civil society

One of the most important aspects of the new constitution must be the manner in which it acknowledges the role of organisations of civil society, not only by giving them guaranteed space in which to function but also by creating conditions in terms of which they can contribute towards enriching the activities of government without losing their independence. The last point is accepted in broad outline, though there is intensive debate on the details.

Regional and local government

For purposes of the present discussion, the important point is that it permits parties which are in the minority at the centre to enjoy office in regions where they constitute a majority. The wider significance of getting levels of government rights is dealt with in the next section.

REGIONAL GOVERNMENT

If people cannot live together peacefully in one country, they will not be able to live together harmoniously in territories side by side. This was the rueful observation by a British minority rights expert commenting on the failure either of enforced power-sharing or of partition to solve the problem of Turk and Greek in Cyprus. The same remark could have been made about Lebanon or Northern Ireland.

There is a dangerously fallacious idea in South Africa that the minority in our country will be protected either if it achieves autonomous homelands that correspond largely to regional ethnic concentrations, or if it establishes enforced power-sharing based on a veto in government.

Both these notions stem from the idea of preserving an embattled political identity outside the mainstream of South African life. Both come from a deep intolerance by the minority of the majority, an unwillingness to enfranchise the majority morally as well as politically. Both are calculated to pit the minority in tense opposition against the majority and to ensure that all political issues are subordinated to majority/minority conflict.

Regional devolution, like partition, in itself does not solve the problem. If not properly handled, the antagonisms retreat behind new frontiers where they regroup and reinforce themselves with the backing of regional ministates. If the stakes of winning power in regional states are too high, a process of political and ethnic cleansing begins. Competition for autonomous control of resources becomes intense, and the country tears itself part.

Fortunately, the debate on regions is beginning to come of age. Instead of focusing exclusively on the question of autonomous powers, the discussion is shifting to an analysis of how to handle concurrent powers: apart from a few questions such as defence, foreign affairs and the currency which belong exclusively to the national government, virtually all other matters have a national, regional and local dimension. Health, education, housing, agriculture, energy — none of these problems can be solved purely at one level alone.

The function of the constitution then, is, not to separate powers in an exclusive manner, but to determine the points of intervention in relation to the same powers for each level of government.

Similarly, the argument about economic viability for the regions is moving away from concentration on fiscal self-sufficiency, which would be disastrous for most regions and undermine national economic development, towards guaranteed access of regions to centrally collected funds.

In both these respects, the German experience is helping to shift debate from metaphysical arguments about the merits and demerits of federalism and unitary states towards concrete means of deepening democracy, organising governmental power and arranging for the delivery of services in a modern society.

The basic problem is to articulate the interdependence and spheres of functioning of centre and regions rather than to try to sever the ties between them. The regions are directly represented in the centre and help to shape national policy. The centre establishes a national framework of law and policy, but it must act through the regions in terms of implementation.

The regions are entitled to mathematically determined ratios of centrally pooled revenue. (Alternatively, as in India and Australia, there can be an independent grants commission that tells Parliament how national revenue should be allocated to the regions.) The state governments answer to the will of the state electorate, not to the national government, but they operate within the framework of the constitution and of national legislation.

If we follow the experience of states such as Germany, then we will not see regional government as a code for group rights writ large. Majorities and minorities will learn to live together everywhere in the country, and at every level. The tolerance must be mutual, majorities for minorities, minorities for the majority. (At the moment, there is more intolerance from the minority towards the majority than vice versa.)

People should feel secure and comfortable everywhere in the land, not just in their political group areas. The regions will not be created at a stroke, but will emerge over a period of time until they are given their final imprimatur by the new constitution. Confidence can be built up stage by stage, provided that people do not envisage regions as asylums from the rest of the country, but acknowledge them as integral parts of South Africa.

TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENTS: A GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL UNITY

Yet, even a combination of the constitutional guarantees listed above and the prospect of successful regions does not appear to be enough to allay the fear of the minority that the achievement of democracy will expose them to retribution and abuse. They claim they need guarantees built into the structure of government itself.

The trouble is that forced power-sharing with built-in vetoes fails spectacularly; voluntary coalitions work.

There is no constitutional arrangement that can establish a political will to cooperate where such will does not subjectively exist. Coalitions endure if they are based on mutual dependency, that is, if the need to hold together is seen by the parties to be greater than the advantages of pulling apart.

Imposed power-sharing in the absence of a will to work together simply results in the political battle being extended to one more area — to the constitution itself. The parties cohabit with hatred, watch each other like snake and mongoose, undermine each other's work and paralyse government.

In no time the civil service, police force and army are drawn into the battle. Every aspect of government and public life is balkanised. Power is not shared; it is divided. Ethnically based battles over positions and resources keep the country permanently at war with itself.

How, then, to ensure a smooth and nonoppressive transition to democracy? Enforced coalitions do not work, a voluntary coalition is too dependent on future goodwill.

The answer has been thrown up by the negotiating process. It takes the form of a voluntarily agreed enforced coalition!

Those who speak in the name of the majority agree to it, even though it means delaying majority rule, because they see it as safeguarding the process of democratic transformation and providing a secure foundation for the reconstruction the country needs. Those who regard themselves as answerable to the minority back the idea, even though they will drastically lose influence, because it ensures that the transition process is not too abrupt and that they will have a direct say in its management.

In both cases, the alternative is mutual ruin. The compromise, based on a realistic appraisal of the interests of both the majority and the minority, is a Government of National Unity for a limited period of time.

The idea is that for an agreed period (that will not be longer than five years after the holding of elections for a Constituent Assembly) the cabinet will be composed of people from both the majority and minority parties. Representation in the cabinet will be proportional to representation in Parliament.

The Government of National Unity will then have a number of responsibilities appropriate to its special composition to enable it to fulfil its particular role during the period of transition. It is a specially composed government to deal with special national tasks.

In the first place, it will be in charge of running the country during the period of about a year when the new constitution is being drawn up.

Second, once the constitution has been adopted it will be responsible for phasing in the new structures. This will be especially important in relation to regional and local government and, possibly, the establishment afterwards of a Senate based on regional representation. Third, the army, the police force, the prisons service and the civil service will all have to be re-shaped in keeping with the principles of representative, competence, impartiality, openness and accountability.

Fourth, programmes of economic reconstruction designed to promote growth for the benefit of all will have to be embarked upon.

Final, far-reaching programmes relating to health, education, housing and general advancement will have to be initiated.

In all these cases, it makes eminently good sense for government to be constituted in such a way as to achieve the widest possible national consensus for the steps to be undertaken.

At the time of writing, there is intensive debate about how precisely the Government of National Unity should be chosen and how it should take decisions. Whatever formula is arrived at, its functioning will always be under pressure. If the consensus about taking joint responsibility for the process of transformation breaks down, there is not the usual fall-back of immediate fresh elections for a newly mandated government.

At the same time, agreement on a Government of National Unity to steer the country through the transition has already unblocked the negotiation process and established a considerable degree of practical working together among leaders of the major political parties. If we can learn to live together in the process of creating a new constitution, it is hoped that we can find the way to live together under the new constitution, and, it is hoped, we will live fairly happily ever after in a more boring but more stable country called South Africa.

SECTION

IV THE SOCIOPOLITICAL CONDITIONS FOR DEMOCRATIC NATION-BUILDING AND INTERCOMMUNITY RECONCILIATION

CHAPTER

14 The sociopolitical conditions for community reconciliation in South Africa
Herbert Vilakazi
Comment by Paulus Zulu

15 The sociopolitical conditions for democratic nation-building: an Afrikaner point of view
Carel Boshoff (IV) and Carel Boshoff

16 The sociopolitical prerequisites for nation-building. Comment on Vilakazi's chapter
Joe Latakgomo

17 Settling for second best: preconditions for reconciliation and nation-building
Steven Friedman

18 Symbolic unity: the role of cultural symbols in nation-building
Charles Malan

19 Response to comment by Zulu, Boshoff, Latakgomo, Friedman and Malan
Herbert Vilakazi

20 Nation-building through pluralism - or civil war? An Inkatha perspective
Gavin Woods

21 Forces inhibiting the making of a South African nation
Johann van Rooyen

CHAPTER 14

The sociopolitical conditions for community reconciliation in South Africa

Herbert W. Vilakazi

Comment

Paulus Zulu

ORIGINS OF THE NATION-STATE

In this chapter we want to identify those factors and processes that are crucial in bringing about reconciliation within a society and which facilitate the creation of a democratic nation-state.

Let us begin with the issue of a nation-state. A clear distinction should be made between the creation merely of a nation-state, and the creation of a *democratic* nation-state. The democratic nation-state is a latecomer in history; indeed, the process of its creation is still going on, even in advanced industrial countries. The twentieth century is actually the century of the building of *democratic* nation-states.

The nation-state, as such, is for most nations a by-product of the American and French Revolutions, although the French Revolution has greater fame among historians: 'Even as a general programme, the aspiration to form nation-states out of non-nation-states was a product of the French Revolution' (Hobsbaum 1977:105). The nation-state is a phenomenon that had its beginnings in the nineteenth century. Its distinguishing feature, from our point of view, is that its creation then did not involve the consent of the overwhelming majority of the governed. It was largely imposed upon the ruled by force of arms, or by the force of the law of the existing state — much as the South African nation-state was formed in 1910 without the consent of the overwhelming majority of the people of the new society, the African people. The formation of the *democratic* nation-state hinges on the consent and mass participation of the overwhelming majority of society, and particularly of the working classes in urban and rural areas.

The colonial states of Africa were nation-states, imposed by force by European imperialist states. The winning of independence from European imperial rule inaugurated the process of the creation of *democratic* nation-states. It has not yet been crowned with final success: forty, fifty years is too short a period for so awesome and complex a process, particularly in an epoch when world power politics also intervene — here for good, there for evil purposes, thus helping the process here, and wrecking it there.

An awareness of the proper time frame is necessary here, in the light of the enormous slander of Africa contained in the many discussions of nation-building. Think of the USA, forty or fifty years after 1776, or even forty or fifty years after the inauguration of George Washington as the first president of the new nation in 1789. Had the 'The First New Nation', as Professor Lipset called the USA (Lipset 1963), become a complete and stable nation-state? Not at all. It was still riddled with serious sectional conflicts and cleavages which climaxed in the Civil War, eighty or ninety years after the founding of the nation. Furthermore, the continuing problem of the oppression and deprivation of the African-American community within the American nation testifies to the fact that the process of the creation of a *democratic* nation-state has not yet been crowned with success even after the celebration of its 200th anniversary! In this major sense there has not yet been communal reconciliation in the USA, as the Rodney King/Los Angeles race conflict in 1992 testified (Hacker 1992; *Time*, 18 May 1992; *Newsweek*, 18 May 1992).

Let us then turn to South Africa. The problem here is likewise that of creating a *democratic* nation-state. The essence of such a state is the equal right of all its members to participate in its affairs. This equal participation is either direct or through elected representatives. Part and parcel of the political content of the democratic nation-state is the equality of all members of society before the law.

However, the successful realisation of the political content of the democratic nation-state *presupposes* a non-political foundation the importance of which is becoming glaringly obvious in the splitting of the USA into what Professor Andrew Hacker calls 'Two nations: Black and white, separate, hostile, and unequal'. The non-political foundation here referred to the acceptance by all of the brotherhood and sisterhood of all members of society. Here emerges, in retrospect, the crucial insight of the makers of the French Revolution, when they included 'fraternité' in that famous trinity of demands that was the symbol of the revolution.

HISTORICAL FACTORS IN SOUTH AFRICA

In the case of South Africa, the barriers to the realisation of communal reconciliation, and to the creation of a *democratic* nation-state, are those *historical* factors that stand in the way of the brotherhood and sisterhood of all the people of the country. What factors are these?

At present South Africa is made up of four communal groups: the African community; the white community; the coloured community; and the Indian community. By communal group, within the South African context, we have in mind a community of people, within the same society, with its own consciousness as a distinct community, compared with others, by virtue of its having a peculiarly common historical experience, culture (particularly language and religion) and unique legal status based on what is taken to be common racial membership. It is important to stress that the four communal groups mentioned above are eminently a product of white supremacy in South African history. This white supremacy in our history is in turn a product of the *conquest* of African people by whites from Europe. This peculiar conquest created what in modern history is called the 'national question'.

Conquest by itself is not sufficient cause for the emergence of the 'national question' in the history of every country. England for example was conquered by the Normans in 1066; but the English people, in relation to their rulers, do not have a 'national problem' still to be solved. The key point here is that the Norman conquerors of Britain were absorbed by the local culture — or there was a new cultural synthesis at the top echelons of society — and in time the conquerors became indistinguishable from other members of society at this level. The conquerors never became a racially based caste, superimposed upon the conquered population. Before modern European capitalist civilisation there was intermarriage in the upper strata of society — universally and irrespective of ethnicity and race (Weber 1978:386). In general the conquerors were absorbed — above all, racially and culturally — by the society over which they ruled. Not infrequently new conquerors emerged, and the same process occurred again. It is out of this process that, over the centuries, the people of Britain evolved. The absence of barriers into the upper strata meant historically that no 'national question' remained unsolved within Britain.

In South Africa there *was* a bar at the top layers of society, hence the 'national question' that still remains unsolved up to our time. The European conquerors remained a racially based caste, the major reference points being skin colour and hair texture. The entirety of the African population remained conquered and lived subjugated all their lives, apparently because of their Africanness and skin colour. The conquerors remained ever distant and foreign to Africans because of that bar. Physical assimilation and intermarriage, between the upper levels of the African population and of the conquerors were ideologically, and later legally, barred.

Just as there was no physical assimilation between the conquerors and the conquered, so there was no cultural assimilation between them, no synthesis of the cultures of the European rulers and of the upper layers of the African population. European students of 'social change', 'cultural change', 'westernisation', 'Christianisation' or 'acculturation', looked only at what had happened to Africans. These concepts were meant to explain the one-sided process of the transformation of Africans towards becoming Europeanised. Dr Verwoerd's conception of 'Bantu Education', and apartheid, was meant to put a stop to this Europeanisation of African people and to the physical and biological mixing of Africans and whites.

THE CONSEQUENCES OF DOMINATION

The sociopolitical consequences of this whole process of English and Afrikaner domination of African people were wide ranging. The overwhelming majority of ordinary Africans were never given a chance to lose the consciousness of being a people conquered by others unlike them in skin colour and culture. This was because whites remained conquerors and they, as rulers with the white population in general (through indoctrination and legal compulsion), refused to mix even with the upper strata of the African population — physically, biologically or culturally. Therefore the physical, cultural and spiritual humiliation of the African was total and seemingly endless.

The sword of the conqueror (violence) and the humiliation of violence were omnipresent and endemic in the rule of whites over Africans. Unlike the Scandinavian and Norman conquerors of Britain — who in time intermarried with the upper echelons of the people of Britain and thereby ceased to be Scandinavian and French, and above all ceased to be conquerors — the European conquerors of Africans in southern Africa never miscegenated with the upper layers of the African population. Therefore they never ceased to be Europeans, whites and, in the eyes of the Africans, conquerors. Whites identified only with one another, with the land and the wealth of southern Africa, not, and never, with the indigenous African people of the land. Through this act and attitude, whites disqualified themselves from being Africans in the eyes and feelings of ordinary African men, women and the youth. Consequently that crucial non-political foundation for the political content of the democratic nation-state — fraternité, or brotherhood and sisterhood of all members of South African society — is missing.

This is where we must begin when confronting and discussing the problem of communal reconciliation and the creation of a democratic nation-state, in South Africa. This is the awesomeness — the incredible difficulty and complexity of our problem. The barrier we are facing is deepest at the psychological level, at the centre of which is our attitude towards the masses of ordinary African people. The

African slave trade completely confused, for all people in the world, the notion of what a human being is. The German scholar Leo Frobenius (1973:58) put it this way: 'For the new land of America needed slaves, Africa had slaves to offer ... But traffic in human beings has never been an easy business to answer for. It demanded justification. So, the Negro was transformed into a semi-animal ...' Through being viewed and treated as a 'semi-animal', the soul of the African suffered the deepest wound ever inflicted upon any people in human history.

What problems must we solve, then, on the way to realising the formation of a democratic nation-state and achieving communal reconciliation in South African society? What barriers must we remove?

THE WOUNDED AFRICAN PSYCHE

In the South African situation there is, first of all, the tremendous, deeply painful wound which was inflicted upon African people when their humanity was denied and they were regarded and treated as 'semi-animal'. Of course, the white-skinned people from Europe, first and foremost, were the perpetrators of this crime against humanity: at the bottom end of the pole was the 'semi-animal' and at the top was the 'white' European. However, it is important to mention that those who were ranked in between the two ends of the pole were dreadfully anxious that they should not be mistaken for the 'semi-animal'. All other groups had to distance themselves conceptually, as far as possible, from the 'semi-animal'. South African racism created the peculiar South African 'Indian' and the peculiar South African 'coloured' as buffers between the peculiar South African 'white' and the 'semi-animal'.

Here is an irony: in order successfully to treat and regard the African as 'semi-animal', all non-African groups had to lower themselves below the true level of humanity and themselves become less than human.

The important point here is that the masses of African people still suffer from that tremendous, deeply painful wound which was inflicted upon their humanity when they were reduced to the level of 'semi-animal'. *In essence, this wound in the African psyche can be closed and healed only by the realisation of majority rule in South Africa; by the restoration of political sovereignty over the country to Africans. This wound shall not be completely healed until whites, Indians and coloureds cease to be whites, Indians and coloureds, and become simply Africans.* The 'sunset clauses' and National Party proposals about 'power-sharing' are mere 'interim measures' — not the final solution, as Joe Slovo clearly stated in his suggestion for the 'sunset clauses'. This will trigger a powerful wave of Africanist nationalism among the millions of ordinary African people in rural and urban areas in whom the wound is still open and painful.

Educated whites, Indians and coloureds, and the political activists among them who interact with educated, westernised Africans at work, in professional associations and in the liberation movements — these people may think that the deep wound to the humanity of Africans has been attended to and closed. Whether or not that is truly the case among educated, westernised Africans is another issue, but we cannot deceive ourselves on this point: for the masses of ordinary African men, women, youths and children in rural and urban areas who form the overwhelming majority of this society, who are uneducated or semi-educated or have even completed high school education, who are the ordinary workers — for all of them, this tremendous, deeply painful wound has not been attended to at all and has not been closed.

From the practical experience of years and generations, the masses of ordinary African people know that they have been held in contempt by most whites, and that, to put it mildly, the masses of ordinary men, women and youths, of the Indian and coloured communities have not defended the humanity of African people when it has been under most savage attack. This deeply and savagely wounded humanity of the African people will remain a most potent, potential source of the politicisation of African cultural identity, giving rise to the most potent African nationalist spirit and movement at the grassroots level of the African community. The major challenge to the African leadership will be to do everything possible to keep this legitimate, corrective, redeeming nationalist spirit and movement within a humanistic framework.

This deeply painful wound in the soul of African people cannot be attended to, healed and closed only through the agreements and compromises made between the *elites* of the African, white, Indian and coloured communities — or, to put it differently, between the leaders of the liberation movements, on one hand, and leaders of the National Party government, on the other hand, or between leaders of political parties. In addition to the educated elites and educated activists, the masses of ordinary men, women and youths, in the African, white, Indian and coloured communities must take part in attending to, healing and closing of this wound — all the more so as the dehumanisation of Africans also dehumanised all those in the racist societies who had to lower themselves below the true level of humanity. As such these societies were capable of regarding and treating millions of fellow human beings as 'semi-animal'. Fraternisation at grassroots level of all the various communal groups is necessary to close the wound and to prevent the infliction of other wounds on other people's psyches.

All of us in a racist society must be raised to the status of true human beings. This gigantic problem of our humanity must be addressed at the grassroots level; and ordinary men, women, youths and children must be direct participants in the healing in their day-to-day lives.

The agreements between leaders of political parties and of educated professional people, no matter how sweet they may be, will not be able to heal and close the wound in the soul of African people without the direct participation of ordinary working men and women throughout the country in the healing process. This wound has its source in the subjugation or subordination of African people below the other communities; *and this subordination has a number of dimensions*: psychological, economic, political, and ideological.

FOUR DIMENSIONS OF SUBJUGATION

- **Psychological**

  The key here is the *contempt* of the African which was expressed in the treatment and regard of him as 'semi-animal'. This is the essence of the wound in the soul of the African people. Whites, of course, were the original perpetrators of the crime but, as I pointed out earlier, those groups in between whites and Africans added salt to the wound by their anxiety and vigilance not to be mistaken for the 'semi-animal'. To that extent, whites, Indians and coloureds severed or alienated themselves spiritually, mentally and physically from their fellow human beings, from their *close blood relatives*, the African people. Can anyone having done this remain spiritually healthy? To that extent, the masses of African people still bear a grudge against their *close blood relatives*. All the peoples of South Africa, therefore, must be cleansed and cured of this sickness which our history has inflicted upon us.

- **Economic**

  The masses of African people are subjugated and exploited economically: dispossessed of their land, they are poor and in the main, low-paid wage workers overwhelmingly unskilled and semi-skilled compared with whites, Indians and coloureds. This is another source of tension which will undoubtedly politicise African cultural identity in relation to the masses of whites, Indians and coloureds, *even after an agreement between political leaders*. It will be extremely difficult to convince the masses of ordinary African men, women and youths of the brotherhood and sisterhood of Africans, whites, Indians and coloureds, when they, the masses of ordinary African people, are at the bottom economically. There will always be a potential source of tension, too, in the relations between Africans and Indians in Natal, especially in Durban, arising from the particular role of Indians in commerce *vis-à-vis* the African community — just as there is tension in relations between Jews and Afro-Americans in the ghettoes of the USA, which has its roots in the economic role of Jews in the ghettoes *vis-à-vis*

Afro-Americans. The tensions arising from the economic subordination of the masses of African people — below whites and Indians in particular, will of course be superimposed upon the tensions arising from the psychological factor mentioned above; indeed this tension will be superimposed upon all the other tensions arising from all other dimensions of the subjugation and subordination of the masses of African people.

• Political

This has reference primarily to the relations between Africans and whites. Whites conquered Africans not too long ago, historically speaking. As a result of that conquest, whites seized political sovereignty from Africans over the entire region of South Africa. The memory of 'before-conquest', and of the conquest itself, is still vivid in the historical consciousness and folklore of the masses of ordinary African people in rural and urban areas, and particularly in the memory and folklore of rural and semi-rural Africans, uneducated and semi-educated African workers, who form the overwhelming majority of the African peasantry and working class. The overwhelming majority of ordinary African people are Africanist, in the sense that they still expect the country to return politically to African people, the way it did in Zimbabwe, Kenya and other African countries. 'Mayibuye i-Afrika', 'Izwe lethu' still express the sentiments and political aspirations of the masses of ordinary African men, women and youths. This is part and parcel of the lifting of African people to full human status, which is a prerequisite for the lifting of whites, Indians and coloureds to full human status. This African nationalism is very legitimate: our urgent obligation is to do all we can to keep it within humanistic boundaries. Whites, Indians and coloureds, therefore, should not fear or sabotage African nationalism. The triumph of African nationalism is a necessary stage, and a necessary inevitability, in the history or progress of South African society. Frustrating or opposing this nationalism will only prolong the anguish and tribulations of all South Africans.

• Ideological

The key here is the embedding of *contempt* for the African and *hero worship* for whites in history books, in the cinema, theatre, mass media, school books, literature, and Western or European culture in general. This poisons and conditions the mind, spirit and behaviour of Africans, whites, Indians and coloureds to accept the automatic leadership and supremacy of whites in all 'worthy' endeavours, giving all non-Africans a heavier, leading role over that of Africans in everything important — including the intellectual formulation and discussion of the problems and situation of African people themselves. This of course is a source of tension, especially among the masses of ordinary African people who have awakened to seek their own liberation. It is a grievance most immediately felt by African intellectuals, who are almost always bypassed in favour of whites, Indians and coloureds in the search for intellectuals to explain to the outside world what is happening among African people. Again, our most urgent task is to imbue this revolt with humanistic aims and criteria so that it does not turn against, or question, the humanity of other people. There are still countless publications that come out, even edited by 'Leftist' white scholars, purporting to be discussing the problems of South Africa, where no African scholars feature at all, or at best where there is one such contribution out of fifteen or twenty articles.

It seems to me that these are the issues we have to face on the way towards communal reconciliation and the creation of a democratic nation-state in South Africa.

REFERENCES

FROBENIUS, Leo. 1973. *Leo Frobenius: 1873-1973*, edited by Eike Haberland. Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner.

HACKER, Andrew. 1992. *Two nations*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.

HOBSBAUM, E. H. 1977. *The age of capital: 1848-1875*. London: Abacus.

LIPSET, Seymour Martin. 1963. *The first new nation*. New York: Basic Books.

Newsweek, 18 May 1992.

Time, 18 May 1992.

WEBER, Max. 1978. *Economy and society*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

COMMENT BY PAULUS ZULU

Vilakazi's chapter opens with an objective to 'identify those factors and processes which are crucial in bringing about reconciliation within a society', factors which 'facilitate the creation of a democratic nation-state'.

In the first instance, Vilakazi collapses democracy and the nation-state into one entity and the two are not necessarily synonymous. There are nation-states which are not democratic but they do not cease to be nation-states because of this. Prewar Germany, Italy and Spain were fascist and highly undemocratic but were nation-states all the same. Problematic as Vilakazi's conceptualisation is, this is not so serious a problem as what follows, first, in the construction of South African society and, second, in the suggested solutions for the eradication of communal conflict.

Vilakazi constructs South African society on the basis of genetic biological attributes. Accordingly race does not only determine one's social standing but also one's ideological affinities. Hence South Africa has four 'communities': the white, the Indian, the coloured and the African. Communal conflict arises out of social inequalities among these four communities, first because the white community controls resources at the expense of the indigenous rightful owners — the African community — with the Indian and the coloured communities as intermediate but direct beneficiaries. Second, because the Indian and the coloured communities act as a buffer between the white and the African communities, there is an inherent conflict between them and the Africans.

While it cannot be denied that Indians and coloureds were treated relatively better than Africans in the social hierarchy, to suggest that 'those who were ranked in-between the two ends of the pole were dreadfully anxious that they should not be mistaken for the "semi animal"' is intellectually irresponsible. Proportionate to their numbers, there are sufficient people of Indian and coloured descent who have featured prominently on the side of Africans in the politics of liberation to the extent of risking their lives in jail and in exile. To sidestep this hard fact as part of the non-racialism of 'Educated whites, Indians and coloureds, and the political activists among them, who interact with educated, Westernised Africans at work, in professional associations, and in the liberation movements' inflicts rather than heals wounds among those who have made sacrifices in the name of non-racialism in South Africa.

Further, Vilakazi's analysis ignores any intracommunal conflict and ideological divergence within race in deference to interracial strife, a fact which is negated by empirical factors. The white race is not politically homogeneous despite its political dominance, nor are the subordinate races. Liberation movements, particularly the African National Congress, straddle all the racial groupings in the country. The present intracommunal strife, particularly in Natal, also belies Vilakazi's construction.

As a piece of intellectual and normative exhortation, Vilakazi's handling of the 'national question' is perhaps the weakest section of the presentation. Vilakazi ignores historical realities while purporting to advance historical factors as the basis of his arguments. For instance, while the land question is critical to the debate, its handling is both shabby and irresponsible given the present state of negotiations in South Africa. There are no practical suggestions on how the land lost through conquest will be returned to the 'owners'. Nor is there any discussion of what happens to those who *de facto* own the land and believe in their 'historical' and 'legal' justification for doing so. The question is left unresolved and it is only by implication that we may assume nationalisation/ expropriation, whatever the case may be. Neither solution creates communal reconciliation or harmony. Instead each reproduces the very intracommunal tensions and strife by reversing the positions.

The final prescriptions which Vilakazi proposes for the 'healing process' to materialise are unfortunately left suspended in space since the 'how' is conspicuously missing. Vilakazi maintains that only 'the realisation of majority rule' and not deals made by the elite will 'heal the wounds'. In essence, this wound on the African psyche can be closed and healed only by the realisation of majority rule in South Africa, by the restoration of political sovereignty over the country to Africans, initially, until whites, Indians, and coloureds cease to be whites, Indians and coloureds and become, simply, Africans. How this will be achieved is left to the reader's imagination. What is essential is that Vilakazi wants to get a dig at the sunset clause, at those political organisations which purport to be non-racial and at the negotiations process. Apparently, if he can achieve this, to him the script would have made sense.

CHAPTER 15

The sociopolitical conditions for democratic nation-building: an Afrikaner point of view

Carel Boshoff (IV)
and
Carel Boshoff

NATION-BUILDING: CONCEPTUAL VARIANCE

Nation-building, as the underlying notion of the nation state, is a key concept in recent thinking about the new South Africa. But just as people differ on the specific meaning of nation- (or state-) building, so do they differ on its value. While some understand it in terms of a (political or economic) socialist project, signifying final success to the liberation struggle, others see it in terms of liberal democracy, based on radical individualist principles and safeguarding the privileges of the middle class.

It is therefore not surprising that South Africans from different backgrounds and different parts of society should react very differently to the nation/state-building debate. But this does not mean to say that anyone could ignore the others or declare them irrelevant or wrong beforehand, especially not if nation-building is addressed in connection with reconciliation.

One of South Africa's communities which is in need of reconciliation, but which is not without reservations on the implications of nation-building, is the Afrikaners. The South African debate could thus not be complete without an Afrikaner-ethnic voice, addressing the question seriously and in an intellectual way albeit not in Afrikaans.

NATION-BUILDING AND THE METAPHOR OF HEALING

Prof. Vilakazi's introductory contribution (see Chapter 14) touches on some key issues. The fact that it is not taken as the final word on the subject should not keep anyone from considering it very seriously — all the more so if one takes into account the very specific bearing it has on Afrikaners' (and whites') roles and expectations in the old and the new dispensations.

He makes an important distinction between the mere existence of some South African nation/state (used as synonyms) and the existence of a democratic South African nation/state. The former is of no interest to him and the whole question is how to achieve the latter. Essentially what is meant by a democratic nation/state is the equal right of all society members to participate in state affairs and the equality of all society members before the law. But this political achievement rests on the social concept of 'fraternité' — brother- and sisterhood. And this is exactly what he finds lacking.

He refers to South Africa's 'national question', which has resulted from the conquest of the land by European colonial powers. The conquering white colonists entrenched their privileged position by (among others) categorising the population under four headings — whites, coloureds, Indians and blacks — and implementing categorical discrimination. The result is that the conqueror and the conquered never assimilated and it followed that political, social, cultural and economical imbalances stayed intact. According to him, this inequality and imbalance finds its ideological and ethical basis in the distinction between European people as 'human' and black people as 'semi-animals'. The result then is not only a mentality, but also a system and structure of white supremacy and black subordination.

He finds it ethically anti-humanistic and uses the metaphor of health: by inhuman acts the actor's as well as the victim's humanity is 'wounded', and needs healing. He draws specific attention to Psychology, Economy, Politics and Ideology as fields in which some active 'healing' should take place. He uses Africanist concepts and puts African nationalism as a necessary and inevitable stage in the progress of the South African society towards full humanity — challenging African leadership to keep it 'within humanistic boundaries'.

THE REAL NATIONAL QUESTION: DIVERSITY, NOT INTEGRATION

Because Afrikaners found the ideology of nationalism a very useful source in their own liberation struggle, it would have been quite hypocritical to react with liberal disgust to Professor Vilakazi's nationalist overtones. At least it implies the sort of social-mindedness that is lacking in liberal individualists, who try to (dis)solve political problems by individualising them. Nevertheless there are some points worthy of debate, especially those with a bearing on the humanistic framework within which the 'nationalist spirit and movement' will be 'legitimate, corrective and redeeming'.

The issue of communal reconciliation and nation/state-building is put in terms of a more essential problem: a central 'national question'. South Africa's national question derives not merely from the fact of being conquered by imperial powers, but from the lack of assimilation and integration of conqueror and conquered, facilitated by categorical discrimination and justified by seeing black people as semi-animals. This line of argument needs some critical investigation.

It is a three-part argument pivoting on the facilitating part in the following way: A facilitated by B results in C. Historically it starts from the present and goes back in time: C is an unacceptable status quo, B is the way in which it came about and A is the presumed motive. This makes possible a theoretical reconstruction, something like: a radical form of prejudice, facilitated by categorical race discrimination results in a lack of social integration.

Reality, as seen in terms of this theoretical reconstruction, calls for a moral judgement, but more than that, it calls for involvement, for action on a moral basis. Non-integration, resulting from such outrageous prejudice as to see a fellow human being as a semi-animal and facilitated by such injustice as apartheid, is argued to be morally objectionable and should be wiped out. Consequently this argument demands political, economic and social assimilation and integration. A position of moral high ground is proclaimed for one sector of society: a position to which all others should converge — not without power-political implications and underlying intentions.

Keeping in mind this vested interest in the outcome of the argument, the semi-animal-perception as a basis for categorical discrimination and its outcome should be considered. Professor Vilakazi's point is based on a German scholar's study of the African slave trade to America — an example with very vague or indirect relevance to South Africa, if at all. In our history the humanity of native Africans was not questioned — even if they were not always treated in a dignified way. Not only were they subjected to the Christian's missionary zeal, but treaties were also concluded between black leaders and colonial authorities, leaders of the Great Trek and Boer republics. Both instances did at least implicitly recognise their humanity. Furthermore, in spite of their 'availability', native people were not (with isolated exceptions) enslaved, hunted or 'tamed' and used like animals. Slaves in the Cape Colony were mostly imported from the Far East and set free in 1834.

Without trying to justify it universally, the authors would argue that categorical race discrimination and its outcome were based not on an anti-humanistic semi-animal-perception, but on some kind of value conservatism. Christian faith and values, as civilisation in general, were identified by the European and Eurocentric colonists and settlers with the 'white' race to which they belonged, while 'black' Africans were treated with a definitive sense of 'otherness'. Although not satisfying late twentieth-century concepts of human rights, racial discrimination at first was value-driven rather than driven by anti-humanistic motives. And then again, it was not the late twentieth-century.

But if it was not a semi-animal perception, if it was a value-and-race prejudice that revolved around categorical race discrimination, reconstructed history cannot be loaded with the same moral intensity. Against such a changed background, non-integration in South Africa can no longer be rejected out of hand without implications for all human diversity. If the pivot, the categorical race discrimination that facilitated specific historical motives, is rejected for bringing about imbalances and injustice, it does not have to mean that South Africa's diversity inevitably is to be rejected too. Then South Africa's 'national question' is not the lack of integration and assimilation, but the search for a positive way to cherish our diversity while addressing previous imbalances and injustices.

This national question does not have to change the crucial value judgement in favour of a democratic nation state made at the outset of Professor Vilakazi's contribution. In fact it could enhance it. Nobody would question the merit of all society members having an equal right to participate in state affairs and being equal before the law. This concept of participation even carries the seed of what could become a more radical form of democracy. But it would take us beyond the traditional nation state — a possibility which unfortunately is not developed, and could not be developed in the face of the ideological nationalism central to his line of argument.

But even so, taking democracy as common cause and basis for argument, the sense of brother- and sisterhood as social precondition for real democracy could be the key to radicalising our notion of it. Democracy should be contemplated not only in terms of the structures and mechanisms that facilitate it, but also in terms of the 'demos' that constitutes it. Fraternité is in the final instance pre-condition to democracy, and not a manipulated post-condition. It cannot be introduced at will for any or every combination of individuals who happened to end up under the same state institutions as a result of the greed of colonial superpowers — at least, not without a lot of very undemocratic force or social engineering.

This is what gave nation-building a bad name. A democratic nation or state is not accomplished by technocratic intervention in people's hearts and minds, creating some form of fraternité that was not there before. It is rather a question of common destiny, recognised by those who share it and actualised by finding ways to institutionalise this community. In a heterogeneous society such as South Africa, any ideology implying national homogeneity will be counterproductive — especially if introduced by a dominant section of society, even a majority, from the top down. If the process has to be democratic, it has to be radical — radical enough to include the possibility of revising accidental boundaries.

RADICALISING DEMOCRACY: A MEETING POINT FOR LEFT AND RIGHT

Radicalising ideological positions in terms of democracy and even radicalising democracy itself may bring about a most interesting theoretical development in South African politics. This has a direct bearing on our understanding of communal reconciliation in South African political theory. It may be described as a convergence, or at least some advances between the creative left and the creative right in terms of concepts such as 'community' and 'democracy'.

Nationalism has been associated with the political right wing in South Africa for various reasons. Afrikaner nationalism was a highly successful mobilising force which resulted in Afrikaner domination of institutional South African politics and a Nationalist Party government for the past four and a half decades. It represented an established interest, protected by a spirit of conservation which even became a reactionary force. By trying to create different national states for black ethnic groups, a certain form of nationalism was also introduced to black South African politics. This nationalism was confirmed by instances of ethnic consciousness and by the use of structures offered by the national state scheme and resulted in some conservation of black established interests. Hence the association of nationalist rhetoric with conservatism was no longer limited to white politics. Even African nationalism did not escape the perceived link.

On the other hand, in South Africa as well as abroad, socialism has traditionally been associated with the left wing. But in South Africa it found some strange bedfellows. In opposition to the nationalist right, the capitalist liberals with a zest for human rights occupied the left in a strange comradeship with, among others, the oppressed, non-racial democratic communists. The left defined itself more in terms of opposition than in terms of coherence.

Because both ideological nationalism and ideological socialism have been put under extreme pressure during the past few years, it has become inevitable that some reorientation should take place. It is not surprising that the conservative right is suddenly protecting established interests in more acceptable liberal terms. Likewise the established left, including previously non-institutional organisations, has been the 'victim' of liberal moderation lately. Both ideologies are in a paradigm crisis and both are under pressure to converge to the same individualist, liberal, capitalist, democratic values.

But neither the national nor the social idea could be exhausted by this surrender of some protagonists to its opposition. Consequently two sorts of radicalisation take place. One is the hardening of attitudes — an intellectual entrenchment in some 'pure' or 'original' form of ideology — resulting in unsavoury extremism and dogmatism. This had blocked out all constructive debate and interaction. The other is a creative redefinition or reconstitution of itself in terms sensitive to the changing context. And this is the point at which the two creative forces may meet.

Because nationalism and socialism are equally uneasy with the radical individualism fundamental to the liberal project, there is a certain amount of resistance to the new-found universality of capitalist liberal democracy. The key to developing an alternative, useful to both, is the concept of community. Community, as a state of being, saves man from the isolation of an unattached individual. It represents a certain view of the world and of humanity which tries to take responsibility for the existential fact that man lives by the grace of other men. Democracy, radicalised along these lines, has been described as participating, republican or radical democracy with a certain social-mindedness and directed at community empowerment. It is sensitive to the particular community, to specific and concrete expressions of humanity and, it implies a certain loyalty to diversity instead of unity or homogeneity. And diversity is the only effective safeguard against the inhumanity of totalitarian ideologies.

Not that nationalism or socialism has a blameless track record when it comes to totalitarian ambitions. In fact, this is the cardinal issue to deal with in appropriating radical democracy. Nationalism tended to bring about nation-states in which individual and particular interests were subjected to the collective interests, the interest of a single, primary entity: being the nation. Socialism tended to bring about a socially orientated economy and state in which some organic intra-relationships gave priority to a central authority — taking decisions for the whole system. Both are inclined towards central decision-making, both have a special weakness for discipline and neither likes competition. Unless they can free themselves from this centralism and replace it with some variation of the federal concept, only the most limited form of democracy could be compatible with it. But by reconstituting itself in truly democratic terms, neither nationalism and socialism, nor democracy could stay the same.

RECONCILIATION IN SOUTH AFRICA: TAKING SERIOUSLY OUR INTERCULTURAL ENCOUNTER

Nor could a topic such as 'The socioeconomic conditions for communal reconciliation in South Africa' stay the same. Reformulating it into a question would expose an important implication of an all too common phrase: Which socioeconomic conditions are necessary for communal reconciliation in South Africa? The implication is: South Africa finds herself in some state of abnormality, in a state that necessitates reconciliation, restoration to some original or normal state of being. All we need to know now is: What prevents these reparation attempts from succeeding? Which obstacles are in our way? Which stumbling blocks should be removed for a safe journey 'back home'? What do we need to do for everything to fall into place?

But this closes our eyes to the question which is most fundamental to our South African life, to the existential reality, intensity and meaning of this intercultural encounter, to the confrontation with those other worlds outside one's own, worlds in which human lives exist with no less legitimacy and no less right to be. We should not be looking for some technical restructuring of society, for some mechanical repair of its working parts. We should rather try to find ways in which this encounter could proceed to an act of communication, mutually recognising the other's autonomy and dignity; entering into communion, aiming at a reciprocal revelation and understanding of each other.

A rephrasing of the question becomes possible against this background. It is no longer a question of which social and political preconditions have to be met in order to facilitate a reconciled South Africa, but rather which South Africa would be able to facilitate a meaningful encounter with the worlds around our own (whichever one that is); which institutional structures would bring about a society that does not stand as a threat towards the diverse communities which constitute it.

THE QUESTION OF VIOLENCE, POVERTY AND RESPONSIBILITY

But then this reformulated question still needs to be answered: Which South Africa will be able to afford a meaningful life to the people who live in her diverse communities? A question with distinct socio-political implications, although not of the traditional socio-political-conditions-kind. This question suggests another line of argument.

It would be easy enough to state the need for a quick and quiet political settlement, for social stability and the rehabilitation of civil society, for economic security and growth so that basic needs such as food, shelter and education could be provided for and people's dignity restored. But this would not suffice — not because it is not true or relevant, but because it does not go deep enough: issues such as colonialism, poverty and the dissemination of consumer society, collective aspirations and bargaining, ethnicity, political power and self-determination, technology, economic growth and natural resources, land, capital and labour, should be addressed.

The problem is that every one of these issues could be — and most probably has been — enough of a theme about which to write a whole book. The last paragraph of a short article cannot but mention some problem areas and perhaps hint in the direction of fruitful discourse.

Three key questions central to South Africa's present crisis may help open up this way of looking for answers. They are: the question of violence, the question of poverty and the question of responsibility.

The question of violence is a burning one (!) and is consequently approached with a sense of urgency. As such this should not be criticised, but neither should it take the place of serious theoretical reflection. If we want more than the suppression of violence by the strongest (hopefully well-intentioned) force, we need to look for more fundamental solutions than social invention by mediating (or other) technocrats. Mediation is indispensable, but it tends to limit our understanding of the social processes at stake. It tends to reduce conflict to a competition for limited resources, to poor management of conflicting interests. The existential dimension of an encounter between different worlds, different languages, different value systems, different conceptions of what capital, property, time, wealth, status, etc., really mean, is lost with such a technicalised approach. The communication that could render this encounter meaningful is limited to a technical process described in terms of sender → message → receiver. Meaningful communication could be enhanced by seeing it as an act of entering into community, revealing oneself to the other and being understood; trying to understand the revealing other.

Violence, seen as the result of an ill-managed competition for limited resources or scarce commodities, is not an isolated or innocent misconception. It is part and parcel of an expansionist ideology that could be exposed by looking at the question of poverty.

In South Africa we are faced with the existential crisis of a hungry, homeless population, but we are interpreting it in the terms of a consumer society. The hungry and homeless cannot be defined away, but the ideology of need, of endemic scarcity brought about by creating unlimited desire can be exposed as the essential feature of Western colonialism. This quest for natural resources, cheap labour and expanded markets — in explicit or subtle forms — did not, and does not, leave any part of people's lives untouched. Most fundamentally it makes them dependent upon the mega-structures of an industrial society imposed by others. It robs people of their autonomy, their self-sufficiency and their responsibility and makes them children of the structures, waiting for a drunken father to care for them.

This is why, on the most fundamental level, we are confronted with the question of accepting responsibility for one's own life, of taking control of one's own destiny. Not thinking that anyone could do it alone, it is life with other people, sharing a home, sharing a town, sharing a common fate and sharing the ways in which it is understood; it is life within the community to which one should be accountable. It is only this multitude of forces, the multitude of self-reliant communities that could stand up against the single authoritarian ideology of consumerism. Because it pretends to solve poverty by producing ever more desirable goods to consume, consumerism actually subjects people by producing unfulfilled desire, by producing poverty.

The mere fact of community life is no safeguard in itself. It has to be activated by participation and it has to be acknowledged by empowerment. This is radical democracy, and this may be the key to the sort of South Africa which is able to give a meaningful life to the people living within its diverse communities.

CHAPTER 16

The sociopolitical prerequisites for nation-building: comment on Vilakazi's chapter

Joe Latakgomo

In this chapter I shall try to examine the role of various concepts in nation-building, and particularly the historical background to the present social and political state in South Africa. I shall examine the role of national symbols, the ethnic question, religious and language differences, and try to determine whether these can play a unifying role in the process of building a South African nation-state and forging reconciliation.

Professor Vilakazi (see Chapter 14) makes a distinction between the creation of a nation-state and the creation of a democratic nation-state in his chapter. I shall go even further and accept Phillip D. Curtin's view that the focus in Africa has been on building what has been described as state-nations, as distinct from the nineteenth century Europe nation-state concept.

This view is based on the premise that, in Africa, leaders were faced with having to bring together a conglomeration of nations — for nations some of them were, even though Europeans called them tribes — and try to weld them into one nation because they had been concentrated in one geographical area by colonial forces.

Just as the Ashante met the criteria for a nation in Ghana, and accepting that there was no such entity as a Ghanaian nation (as indeed there still is not), we can take the same argument to the South African experience where the Zulu empire, clearly meeting the criteria of a nation, existed, as did the Xhosa and the Basotho nations. But after the Industrial Revolution, African kings became chiefs in the eyes of the European to distinguish them from their European equivalent, and nations became tribes later on to imply primitiveness and inferiority (Curtin 1966:147).

National institutions that did exist were often used by colonialists to enforce colonial codes and behaviour, and over the years lost legitimacy as people's institutions. To focus more specifically on South Africa, let us examine the birth and rise of Afrikaner nationalism — its impact on nation-building in this country, and the extent to which this process will influence reconciliation.

The Great Trek was regarded as the birth struggle of the Afrikaner nation (Keppel-Jones 1975:61). The emancipation of the slaves was given as one of the major reasons for the trek, but Anna Steenkamp, in giving reasons for the emigration, said that it was not so much 'their freedom that drove us to such lengths, as their being placed on an equal footing with Christians, contrary to the laws of God and the natural distinction of race and religion' (Keppel-Jones 1975:62).

It took time for Afrikaner nationalism to take root, however, and it was much later, when there was a view of a threat to the South African Republic, that citizenship laws were revised to include qualification on the basis of skin colour. 'The people of the South African Republic desire to permit no equality between coloured people and the white inhabitants, either in church or state' (Keppel-Jones 1975:75).

Although there were deep divisions within the Boer Republics, British policy ensured a unity of purpose which served as the basis for the spirit of Afrikaner nationalism.

Willem de Klerk argues that the Afrikaner is both alien and indigene in Africa, 'a sort of ambivalence ... which found expression in different attitudes showing an unwillingness, as white Africans, to share a common destiny with black Africa'.

The fleeting experience of colonialism did not allow the development or evolution of proper states and, out of those states, nations. The colonial presence even suppressed the spirit of nationalism among those indigenous peoples, but while independence brought new leaders, the colonial institutions remained the same and it was often difficult to change the institutions to meet the demands of a new cultural and social era. For that reason, nation-building ground to a halt in most of Africa.

Sandbrooke argues that ethnicity is not transitory, and that it has grown since the turn of the century along with uneven development and individual and group competition in new territorial areas. Colonial regimes did little to create a sense of national identity in order to create nation-states, nor did they do much to pursue nation-building policies.

Independence was seen as only the first step toward removing the conflict points in African states. Although Mafeje (1971:253-261) believes that tribalism is being used to oversimplify the conflicts, he agrees that it is a major contributory factor to the conflicts in Africa.

While those African states which gained independence in the first wave of colonial disengagement realised the need for nation-building, the same cannot be said of South African society. Differences among people were exploited as a divisive instrument. Having lost two Boer Republics, the Afrikaner was resolute in his pursuit of Afrikaner domination.

The first chairman of the Afrikaner Broederbond, speaking at the fiftieth anniversary of the secret organisation, is quoted by Wilkins and Strydom as having boasted: 'Do you realise what a powerful force is gathered here tonight between these four walls? Show me a greater power on the whole continent of Africa! Show me a greater power anywhere!' Through the Broederbond, Afrikaans was promoted in the public service, in city councils, farmers' organisations, provincial administrations, education and government, through a policy of ensuring the appointment of 'well-disposed Afrikaners' to senior and influential posts.

Here, as in the rest of Africa, the enemy of the indigenous Africans has been identified as the settler colonialists, and the process of mobilising has been based on slogans which have focused on freedom. Davidson (1984:309) argues that the driving inspiration was not that all men should be divided by becoming nationals, but that all men should be united by becoming free.

Leadership saw tribal nationalism as an artificial barrier against equality, and therefore against freedom.

The echoes of Zambia's 'One Zambia, One Nation' slogan can be heard here in various forms, notably the Azanian People's Organisation's 'One Azania, One Nation', but even more pertinently the African National Congress slogan 'Mayibuye, IAfrika', which has been revived to counteract the attraction of blacks to the Pan-Africanist Congress slogan of 'Afrika, Izwe Lethu' (Africa, Our Land).

When he addressed a Heroes Day service in 1959, Robert Sobukwe declared that 'African nationalism is the only liberatory creed that can weld these masses who are members of heterogenous tribes into a solid disciplined and united fighting force; provide them with loyalty higher than that of the tribe and give formal expression to their desire to be a nation'.

It is against this historical background that today's political leaders have to try to build a new nation, a new South Africa. But we have tended to overlook the brutalisation of all society by the political system we are trying to rid ourselves of. We define victims as those who are, or have been, denied their rights and recognition as citizens or as human beings. We tend to see only the brutalisation of blacks and yet, the Afrikaner himself must surely have been just as brutalised. Africans may be victims of oppression, but it is actually in times of transition such as now that the Afrikaner realises that he was just as much a victim of the system, and this brutalisation is clearly manifest in the right-wing Afrikaner's objection to the democratisation process which he fears may lead to retribution, rather than a process of righting past wrongs. His psychological wound may not be bigger, but it seems to be more painful.

Blacks, as Essien-Udom observes, are estranged from the larger society which they seek to enter, but which rejects them. Although he refers here to the experience of the black American, the statement holds equally true for the South African experience. The inferiority mentality that centuries of oppression of the blacks in this country has created cannot be negotiated away. In its own way, the surge of black consciousness in the sixties and into the early seventies, up to the death of Onkgopotsi Tiro and Steve Biko, was a response to this need for blacks to purge themselves of the notion of white superiority and black inferiority.

This psychological enslavement is manifest in the violence in the black townships. As the black Muslim leader Elijah Muhammad said in a newspaper interview:

> It struck me recently that among whites, Negroes seem on their best behaviour. They seem to go out of their way generally to be inoffensive, courteous, in most instances, and on their best behaviour in order to convey to the boss whites that they represent the 'best' negroes, and are not at all like those who raise hell and have no respect for racial opinions of the whites who have on occasion encountered them under adverse circumstances. **But among their own, or once they get back home, that's when the butting and cutting, shooting and booting takes place. For they seem to lose all sense of values as they wreak their pentup original dislike of whites on those of their own blood, colour and bone** (Burly, *Chicago New Crusader*, 1 April 1961. My emphasis).

The question arises, therefore, whether the majority of the population — black and white — will accept the result of any negotiation process. The focus of the negotiating principles seems to us to be about the process of power transfer, rather than the question of legitimacy. But there is no doubt that existing government structures will have to change to be able to respond to the needs of a new society. Such changes must invariably lead to tensions as the new governing elite try to deal with the question of ethnic assertiveness — the clarion call around which mobilisation took place — as the 'system' and apartheid disappear.

And yet, the African experience has been that once the colonial masters had been driven away, the victors fell back to distribute the booty, and one of the major ways of distributing the spoils was employment in the bureaucracy where ethnic and factional interests replaced technical competence, which led to the high levels of political and administrative decay evident in much of Africa today.

Ethnic solidarity, however, does not necessarily make a nation. And the politicisation of ethnicity in South Africa has made the question of ethnicity that much more important as an element which needs serious consideration if bonding for nation status is to be achieved. Lonsdale's view (1981:154) that states do not have origins, but are formed through a slow social and political process, holds true for nations, too. Are we capable of creating such new bonds of national identity? It has taken centuries of maturation for the nations of Europe to bond, and to expect South Africa to make that leap in years, even decades, and for raw wounds cut by racism bred by ethno-nationalism to heal quickly is perhaps hoping for too much.

Kwame Nkrumah spoke in vain when he told his followers: 'We must insist that in Ghana, in the high reaches of our national life, there be no reference to Fantes, Ashantes, Ewes, Fas, Sagombas, but that we should call ourselves Ghanaians all brothers and sisters, members of the same community the State of Ghana ...'

Here, the quest is on for unifying symbols, even as President De Klerk faces a crisis of morality among his own people. The parties involved in the negotiating process are hoping to be able to agree on ways of finding a political structure that can be held together long enough for power consolidation by seeking consensus, uniformity and inclusivity, almost to the extent of avoiding conflict at all cost.

Bill Freund (1984:5) observes that every self-conscious nation looks back upon its past to revive former glories, to discover its origins, to relate its history to that of other parts of the world and to arrive at a knowledge of the development of its political, social, economic and other systems. It is this looking back that will make reconciliation even more difficult, as blacks view the white power bloc as being responsible for their miserable state, and even locate the white power bloc and the economic power bloc together as bedfellows in oppression. For blacks, nothing short of material, cultural, moral freedom and a sense of dignity will be enough. White symbols will remain important for whites, and for Afrikaners in particular, as they look back on their own history. The Boer Republic flags are back in vogue, meant to stir up the flame of Afrikaner nationalism in the deepest recesses of the Afrikaner heart. The monuments speak of their victories, often over black adversaries.

Street names are a constant reminder of apartheid structures. Towns and buildings were often named in celebration of the successful displacement of blacks. In response, tragically, blacks risk the grave danger of creating the very symptoms that underpin personal rule: townships named after the leader; soccer stadiums; universities falling over themselves trying to get the leader's nod for the chancellorship, or offering honorary doctorates in abundance, his/her photograph adorning the walls of every public and private building in veneration. The lessons of history have clearly not been learnt: that today's heroes may well be tomorrow's villains. Reconciliation cannot, therefore, be built on this kind of symbol naming.

The ANC is trying to woo the Afrikaner, but clearly, the seeds of suspicion have taken root, and there is a real danger of a civil war sparked off by right-wing Afrikaners.

These are the odds that have to be faced in rebuilding the structures of nation and state that have been destroyed over the years by apartheid. This rebuilding will be a long, painful exercise, but we should rather face the pain now than leave it to our children who may just believe it impossible to find each other.

REFERENCES

CURTIN, Philip D. 1966. Nationalism in Africa, 1945-1965, *The Review of Politics*, 28, April.

DAVIDSON, Basil. 1978. *Let freedom come*. Boston: Little, Brown.

DAVIDSON, Basil. 1984. *Africa in history*. London: Palladin.

DE KLERK, Willem. 1984. *The second (r)evolution: Afrikanerdom and the crisis of identity*. Johannesburg: Jonathan Ball.

ESSIEN-UDOM, E. U. 1970. *Black nationalism: a search for an identity in America*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

FREUND, Bill. 1984. *The making of contemporary Africa*. Indianapolis: Indiana Press University.

KEPPEL-JONES, Arthur. 1975. *South Africa: a short history*. London: Hutchinson.

LONSDALE, John. 1981. *States and social processes in Africa: a historiographical survey*. *African Studies Review*, 24.

MAFEJE, Archie. 1971. The ideology of tribalism. *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 9(2).

SANDBROOKE, Richard. 1985. *The politics of Africa's stagnation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

TANGRI, Roger. 1985. *Politics in Sub-Saharan Africa*. London: James Currey.

THOMAS, Karis & GAIL, Gerhardt, M. 1977. *Challenge and violence, 1953 1964* In: THOMAS, Karis & GWENDOLENE, Carter (eds). *A documentary history of African politics in South Africa, 1882-1964*, Vol. 3. Stanford University: Hoover Institute Press.

TORDOFF, William. 1984. *Government and politics in Africa*. London: Macmillan.

WILKINS, Ivor & STRYDOM, Hans. 1978. *The Super Afrikaners*. Johannesburg: Jonathan Ball.

CHAPTER 17

Settling for second best: preconditions for reconciliation and nation-building

Steven Friedman

One great danger of the South African transition is that by seeking too much, we will end up with too little.

We are sometimes told that a post-apartheid South Africa must achieve high levels of economic growth, or a 'lean civil service', or all manner of highly ambitious goals if we are to avoid disaster. It may be important to strive for these goals — but to assume that, if we do not get them, we are sunk, is counterproductive. If we insist that our choice is between utopia and disaster, we will end up with disaster because we will not confront the 'second-best' strategies which may enable us to progress steadily to the more ambitious goals.

This point applies particularly to nation-building and reconciliation — and even more particularly to the approach adopted by Professor Vilakazi in his introductory Chapter 15.

SEEKING THE UNATTAINABLE

Vilakazi's chapter emphasises the extent to which we are not yet a nation and the obstacles to reconciliation. His analysis of the effects of apartheid may be jarring to many white ears in this time of proclaimed new beginnings, but its moral charge is difficult to gainsay. Nevertheless, without denying the devastation — political, economic and psychological — wrought by racial domination, it is necessary to point out that his proposed solution is unattainable, at least in the medium term; that it would not produce the results which he holds out for it; and that the consequences which he predicts (by implication) if his prescription is not followed will not necessarily materialise.

If we are to have reconciliation and, therefore, a democratic nation-state, we need, Vilakazi argues, to recognise the 'national question'. This expresses itself, first, in the reality that, 'in the eyes and feelings of ordinary African, men, women and youth', whites 'disqualified themselves from being Africans'. Second, 'the masses of ordinary African people' know that they have been 'held in contempt' by whites and, to a lesser extent, 'coloured' and Indian people; reconciliation is not possible until 'this terrible wound' is healed. This makes African nationalism inevitable and we can but hope that it expresses itself in a 'humanist' way. The wound will fester until African sovereignty over the entire country is restored; the ultimate remedy is one in which 'whites, Indians and coloureds cease to be whites, Indians and coloureds and become, simply, Africans'. One condition is a 'leading role' for Africans in 'everything important'.

There is little prospect that purely *African* sovereignty will be extended over the country soon, if at all. Vilakazi is aware that constitutional negotiations centre on a compromise which will fall far short of this goal. This has little to do with — as Mrs Mandela would have us believe — the desire of certain leaders to scramble aboard a power-sharing gravy train. It is an accurate reflection of the balance of power within the country.[1] And this will persist for quite some time even if a five-year 'power-sharing' experiment indeed gives way to majority sovereignty after that period, an outcome which itself cannot be taken for granted.

It is surely contradictory to argue that white domination has gathered unto the minority a disproportionate share of skills, resources and weapons and then to assume that this situation will change quickly because politicians are engaged in compromise negotiations. It is equally contradictory to insist that whites (and 'coloureds' and Asians) harbour deep feelings of contempt for the majority of the population and then to assume that they will accept African 'sovereignty' unless they are forced to do so. So this solution is possible only if we assume that minority power is to be smashed and this is simply not in prospect.

Even if it were possible to impose the sovereignty which Vilakazi seeks, it is unlikely to lead to the common identity which he posits. In other African societies, the 'national question' was solved because non-Africans comprise so small a portion of the population that the question of reconciling them hardly arose; those who remain after most others have left are probably reconciled to African sovereignty in any event. Here again, there is no such prospect. Van Zyl Slabbert has pointed out that, even if 800 000 whites leave (as they did in Algeria), there will still be around 5 million here by the year 2010, some 10 per cent of the population; Africa's largest other white minority, proportionally, is Senegal's 1,3 per cent (Slabbert 1992:15).[2]

So for the foreseeable future, there will be an appreciable number of whites here, far more than in any other African country. Since in Vilakazi's view, they have inherited attitudes of domination formed over centuries (the National Party did not invent racial domination in 1948, it merely tried to perfect it), they are unlikely to 'become Africans' even under majority rule. There will also be large numbers of 'coloured' people, many of whom may be equally unwilling.

Indeed, evidence from other divided societies suggests that significant minorities (and 10 per cent is significant) rarely respond to majority sovereignty by simply submerging their identities. They continue to resist, submit grudgingly, or are accommodated through minority safeguards.[3]

This argument should be clarified, lest it be misunderstood. It does not insist on the 'naturalness' of racial divisions. It merely asserts that societies divided *by domination* do not cease to be divided because the previously 'oppressed' group asserts itself over the 'oppressor'. Nor does this presuppose a moral equivalence between those who imposed domination and those who were its victims; on a moral level, Vilakazi is correct to insist that we are not simply dealing with a battle between two contending blocs, but with a legacy of conquest and subordination. But the moral diagnosis does not necessarily prescribe a turning of the tables: so, at any rate, concentration camp victim Elie Wiesel, who campaigned against the death penalty for Adolf Eichmann, believed. To argue that Africans must retain and assert their identity and that others must surrender theirs *is* to demand a reversal.

Even if submission by minorities is held to be the moral course, it is misleading to hold this out as an option for 'reconciliation' when it will have the opposite effect. Vilakazi may believe that the crimes of the past are so enormous that they do not warrant reconciliation. But, if it is reconciliation that he seeks, he will have to look elsewhere for solutions. And these would have to acknowledge that, even if the morality of his brand of 'African sovereignty' is accepted, to insist that reconciliation can only begin when it is achieved, is to place it on the back-burner for many years. Given this, what are our prospects of reconciliation and of building a united nation without 'African sovereignty'?

THE LIMITS OF RECONCILIATION

A look at present realities suggests that, if Vilakazi's solution is flawed, much of his diagnosis is not. We are not reconciled across racial barriers and there is no better litmus test of this than sport. Despite the ANC's promotion even of all-white national sports teams, politically aware black people continue to cheer for anyone who plays against the national rugby team; whites are largely indifferent to the national soccer team. The appearance of our Olympic team under a 'neutral' banner provoked white outrage. And the flurry over De Klerk Junior's brief engagement to a 'coloured' woman reinforces the sense that whites, at any rate, are not rapidly submerging their sense of distance from blacks.

There is no reason to expect this to change once a racial compromise is agreed. If the divisions of the past will not change rapidly under African sovereignty, there is even less reason to assert that they will do so under 'power-sharing' or any of its variants. To be sure, arrangements of this sort have forged a common national identification (alongside a communal one) in Belgium, for example. But here, the recent history of conquest and subordination will make this unlikely.

Zimbabwe may be an instructive example. Although 'African sovereignty' was recognised there, for ten years after independence, whites were offered 20 guaranteed seats in Parliament — a form of minority accommodation, albeit not one which gave whites appreciable power. They responded by regularly returning candidates committed to 'old' white values — and by largely retaining the distance from their compatriots on which the old order was built. This suggests that measures designed to recognise historical differences do not erode them.

The rationale for compromises of this sort is not that they provide ways of abolishing distances, but of accommodating them. As one foreign observer has observed, the optimum outcome under these, as under any other, conditions, is a mutual recognition of common citizenship, but with a continuation of a distinct and separate sense of community.[4]

So Vilakazi is right to imply that, under the balance of power in the next decade or more, reconciliation is unlikely — *if that is understood as a submerging of racial identities within a common South African (let alone 'African') identification.* To argue that 'power-sharing' will do this is as misleading as to insist that 'African sovereignty' will. In general (there are always those individuals who move ahead of prevailing mores and attitudes) South African social behaviour, attitudes and political perspectives are likely to correlate closely to race if, as seems likely, a compromise is agreed. But this may say more about the wisdom of pinning our hopes on 'reconciliation' than about our prospects for peace.

FROM RECONCILIATION TO COEXISTENCE

The implication of this argument may well be that whatever approach is followed, prospects for speedy reconciliation — if it is defined as above — are slim. That is a loss. Despite the fashionability of cynicism on this issue, a single, reconciled, South African nation remains a prize for which the best of us will (and should) continue to work.

But reconciliation, defined in this way, may not be a necessary condition for a workable post-apartheid South Africa in which all citizens enjoy the franchise and steady progress is made towards a richer democracy. If this can be shown, it is worth questioning whether reconciliation is the urgent necessity which the theme of this collection assumes it to be — particularly since it might prompt us to seek the unattainable in exchange for a quest for the workable.

This analysis has suggested that we lack, and are likely to continue to lack, what Dankwart Rustow (1970) has called 'a sense of community'. But we have something else which many divided societies lack — a sense of interdependence. While many blacks and whites might prefer to do without each other, the majority on both sides know that they cannot.

There is substantial survey evidence to support this proposition (of which more later). But visible trends in national politics also substantiate it: despite severe tensions and incidents of racial violence, black parties such as the Pan-Africanist Congress and Azanian Peoples' Organisation and white ones such as the Conservative Party and Afrikaner Volksunie are drifting reluctantly to the negotiating table for want of alternatives. This is not a consequence of their lack of imagination or resolve, but of a reluctant recognition that the white supremacist, Africanist and black consciousness dreams are unattainable, at least in their 'pure' political forms.

There are good reasons for this. Whites and blacks may not share each others' affections or even, in most cases, their private social space, but they do share an economy, albeit an unequal one. Many whites might perhaps prefer to live in the state posited by the Oranjewerkers if they could find other whites to do the manual work. Since they are unprepared to make inordinate sacrifices for racial purity, they prefer to make grudging compromises for some prospect of prosperity. Many black people may prefer 'African sovereignty'. But they are aware, explicitly or implicitly, that apartheid not only created the sense of hurt which Vilakazi describes, it also ensured that the black majority, as a result of a state policy which was devastatingly effective, lack skills, resources, governing experience and, to be frank, military muscle. That will not be remedied quickly — although Vilakazi is justified in insisting that a start be made immediately — and, until it is, whites will, to put it at its most cynical, remain necessary, even if they are not prepared to heal the wounds which Vilakazi diagnoses.

This does not mean, it must be emphasised, that domination will remain, dressed in new clothes. Universal franchise, equal and non-racial access to all state facilities and entitlements — including, for example state schools — are necessary conditions for a post-apartheid order. So too is vigorous action to redress apartheid-induced inequalities and to reduce poverty. But if we expect all this to produce a melting away of a sense of distance, we will be disappointed. Whites and blacks may find ways of living with each other in public space, rather than in its private equivalent. To 'live with' the other is still, of course, to continue to see an 'other'; but it is not necessarily to reject the compromises and accommodations which might underpin a functioning and reasonably equitable society. Whether over time, this will lead to 'reconciliation', we do not know. But if it does, progress may be measured in decades, not years.

But what of that bitterness and impatience for 'sovereignty' among the 'ordinary masses' of which Vilakazi warns?

In principle, claims that 'the masses' think or feel in particular ways should be treated with great caution. First, the 'masses' do not have a single mind, nor do they hold only one opinion; indeed, it pays no great respect to the black South African citizenry to claim that they do. More important, on what evidence are claims about their sentiments and aspirations based? Merely to hold strong views is not to gain an accurate insight into the minds of so many people.

This author claims no greater insight into the public mind. But, as implied above, we do have evidence and it does not seem to substantiate Vilakazi's claim. This chapter has suggested that political behaviour — the ANC's success in 'selling' strategic compromise to its members, limited support for the PAC — suggests a different picture of 'grassroots' sentiment. The only quantifiable evidence we have is drawn from surveys. Thus, in a 1987 poll, 75 per cent of Africans in the PWV region approved of a multiracial government, compared with 45 per cent who approved 'an African-dominated' one (Van Vuuren *et al.* 1987).[5] In a 1989 PWV survey, only 33 per cent of PWV Africans endorsed 'sovereignty'.[6] It may be argued that these are studies conducted by conservative pollsters. But, to the best of this author's knowledge, no surveys conducted by researchers 'on the left' have produced contrary findings. In addition, surveys conducted by researchers who are certainly not conservative have found an overwhelming preference for negotiated compromise rather than its alternatives.[7] And these attitudes are strongest precisely among the 'ordinary' people in whose name 'African sovereignty' is demanded.[8]

This is not to suggest that 'ordinary' black South Africans are servile, or that they are resigned to whatever the fates have in store for them. No-one likes being a second-class citizen, or being poor, or being denied opportunity; black South Africans are no different. But survey attitudes suggest a realism which is sharply in contrast not only with suggestions that 'the people' will 'settle for nothing less than ...' but with its variant on the other side of the divide, the tired cliche that 'blacks hold unrealistic expectations'.

There *are* black people whose expectations far exceed those described here. But, in the main, there is nothing 'ordinary' about them. They are intellectuals, or professionals, or political activists or union shopstewards. And their claims are strengthened if they are able to impute their often legitimate frustrations to 'ordinary people'. Vilakazi's own plea for greater recognition of the work of black intellectuals highlights an important need — but it is hard to imagine that this is an issue which moves 'ordinary' people. Reconciling the expectations of those who are frustrated with the interests of the establishment may prove very difficult indeed, but it will be harder still as long as the 'masses' in whose name many claims are made, remain silent.

To say both that we are better advised to aspire to coexistence than to pin our hopes on reconciliation and that this is a realisable goal is to beg another question. What are the sociopolitical preconditions for the more modest goal?

CONDITIONS FOR COEXISTENCE

The observation that our goals would be more realisable if our understanding of what 'ordinary people' want was more accurate, raises the first precondition — political and social participation. At present, we barely know what the terms for coexistence might be since the disenfranchised majority have few, if any, opportunities to express an opinion.

Obviously, universal franchise is a precondition; but more is needed. Functioning representative institutions at every level of the society, particularly the local, would be essential. In addition, there is already evidence that, when representative interest group leaderships negotiate with each other across our divide, there is far more pragmatism than the prospensity for polarisation in the society would suggest. The most obvious example is the development of labour relations over more than a decade, but recent local government or development negotiations underline the point. The difficulty is that these processes are restricted to a minority; unionised workers, though an important force, are not a majority while few 'community' members have much say in the local or socioeconomic bargains which are made in their name. The more representative interest and other associations emerge in 'civil society', the stronger they become, and the more accessible they become to the 'masses' who often lack the resources or free time to participate in social or political organisation, the greater our prospects of coexistence.

But, given the balance of power sketched here, interest organisations would serve not to propel the majority to sovereignty, but to make possible workable and widely supported bargained compromises between minority and majority interests which, as noted above, are already emerging. The more representative these become, the more possible will it be to achieve the *realisable* goals of the previously dominated majority while securing the consent (even if sometimes grudging) of the necessary minority. To recognise the balance of power and to channel it into representative processes may be to heal, rather than to infect, the wounds.

This presupposes a more basic precondition — stability. Democratic politics or effective interest bargaining is impossible without it. And if the citizenry, particularly its black majority, do have an overwhelming preference, then the evidence we do have suggests that it is one for peace. This is hardly surprising: in an urban context, the fear that a trip from work to home or back on a train — or, indeed, a quiet evening at home — may end in death is likely to outweigh most other considerations. If a political settlement is able to create conditions in which political leaderships take joint responsibility for maintaining order in ways which do not force on the citizenry a new threat to their safety (such as oppressive behaviour by the 'forces of order'), prospects for coexistence will grow substantially.

Finally, perhaps the most important point of all — economic growth and effective action against poverty. There *is* strong evidence that rising living standards blur racial and other intercommunal tensions, and that straitened economic conditions increase them. And, while growth is an indispensable condition for coexistence, it will have to make an appreciable difference to the conditions of the malnourished, the homeless, those without basic services.

Again, alarmist solutions can lead to overambitious and counterproductive 'solutions'. If our prospects for coexistence do depend on 5 per cent growth per year and the elimination of all backlogs in less than a decade, the game is lost. But prospects for compromise may be brighter than they seem.

This is another area in which 'the masses' may be more pragmatic than their interlocutors claim. There is a justifiable expectation that political change must bring socioeconomic improvements. But visible improvements together — equally importantly — with a confidence that there will be further improvements, would meet immediate expectations and reduce tensions. The sorts of measures which are needed are also affordable at relatively modest levels of growth.

If this is a condition for coexistence, it is also a test for it. Prospects for growth and poverty reduction will depend largely on binding compromises between those who have resources and those who need them: they depend on the interest bargaining discussed above.

None of this will ensure an entirely reconciled society with a pervasive sense of common purpose — at least for many years. But it could enable us to achieve a coexistence necessary to begin reconstructing order and growth on the ruins of domination — and, perhaps, to provide a platform for more thorough and lasting reconciliation in the decades ahead.

NOTES

1. For an elaboration of this argument from a 'liberation' perspective, see African National Congress, *A strategic perspective*, Johannesburg, 1992.

2. The figures exclude Namibia where it is too early to judge propensities for reconciliation.
3. For a wealth of comparative material, see Hanf 1989.
4. I am indebted to Professor John Rex of Warwick University for this insight, offered at a Centre for Policy Studies discussion in 1990.
5. Respondents were not asked to endorse one option only.
6. Marketing and Media Research survey commissioned by Argus newspapers, October, 1988, quoted in Giliomee and Schlemmer 1989:215.
7. In one survey, 65 per cent of black respondents identified 'negotiation and reconciliation' as the key to ending violence. (See Hofmeyr 1993.): An earlier Case survey, in which 'questions' posed to respondents read more like an 'anti-system' tract than a test of opinion, fully 90 per cent favoured negotiation between the government and black leadership (see Orkin 1986). This latter example is particularly striking, since the author is at great pains to stress a radicalisation of attitudes.
8. Surveys indicate that pragmatism *increases* the more 'ordinary' the respondents happen to be. Thus Orkin (1986:64) confirms a moderating of attitudes as formal education levels decline, although he is at pains to stress that this is less significant than other pollsters claim.

REFERENCES

African National Congress. 1992. *A strategic perspective.* Johannesburg: ANC.

GILIOMEE, Hermann & SCHLEMMER, Lawrence. 1989. *From apartheid to nation-building.* Cape Town: Oxford University Press.

HANF, Theodor. 1989. The prospects of accommodation in communal conflicts: a comparative study. In: GILIOMEE, Hermann & SCHLEMMER, Lawrence. *Negotiating South Africa's future.* Johannesburg: Southern.

HOFMEYER, Jannie. 1993. Political opinion polls: what the numbers tell us. In: EVERATT, David, ORKIN, Mark & PITYANA, Sipho. *Case perspectives on transition politics in South Africa: party, power and prospects.* Johannesburg: Case.

ORKIN, Mark. 1986. *Disinvestment, the struggle and the future: what black South Africans really think.* Johannesburg: Ravan Press.

RUSTOW, Dankwart A. 1970. Transition to democracy: a dynamic model. *Comparative Politics,* April.

SLABBERT, Frederik van Zyl. 1992. *The quest for democracy.* Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Forum Series.

VAN VUUREN, D.J. *et al.* 1987. *South African elections 1987.* Pinetown: Owen Burgess.

CHAPTER 18

Symbolic unity: the role of cultural symbols in nation-building

Charles Malan

SYMBOLIC COMMON GROUND

There can be little doubt that one of the thorniest problems facing South Africa in the quest for reconciliation is the attainment of a sense of brother- and sisterhood, 'fraternité', as was pointed out by Professor Vilakazi. With political polarisation and the concurrent violence escalating by the day, the thesis to be discussed here is that the sense of 'fraternité' should in the first place be sought at the symbolic and, in particular, the cultural level.

Obviously, one of the main obstacles in the way of finding common symbolic ground is the lack of cultural assimilation and synthesis between the conquerors and the conquered, as was discussed by Vilakazi. Yet there are encouraging signs that most South Africans take pride in certain aspects of a shared cultural heritage, such as indigenous musical forms (jazz, Mbaqanga, Kwela), art and architectural styles (those of the Ndebele, the Cape Dutch style), the legacy of leaders and artists (Gandhi, Alan Paton, Sol Plaatje), geographical symbols (Table Mountain) and so forth. This points the way for a conscious cultivation of those symbols which can be seen to represent a 'South African' culture and the country in general. Of these, the official national symbols (the flag, anthem and coat of arms) are clearly the most powerful.

Symbols in general veil and reveal reality; they imply something that is hidden or unknown. Since symbols create society, there may be serious consequences if they are repressed or ignored. They promote participation by the observer and are able to inspire, elevate and unite the fragment with the totality. As 'transformers of energy' they guide the processes of transformation and integration.

THE EFFECTS AND FUNCTIONS OF NATIONAL SYMBOLS

The potentially strong bonding and unifying function of national symbols becomes clear in the HSRC's comprehensive analysis of these symbols within the South African context (Malan 1993:26-36). National symbols appeal to the emotions, idealism and patriotism of a country's citizens in a profound and almost irrational way. They are the symbolic shorthand by which any country's people can express their sense of nationhood, loyalty and devotion (Cerulo 1989:78). Symbols are able to mobilise and reinforce goals for citizens.

National symbols can play an important unifying role in the process of nation- or state-building. They embody a vision of society and shared value systems, and are a nation's links with its history. Ideally, they should be able to establish a balance between unity and cultural diversity.

All widely recognised symbols are rich in meaning and often ambiguous. They have the ability to inspire, mobilise, unify, express solidarity and identification. However, symbols can function in both a unifying and divisive way; consider the swastika, Star of David, the hammer and sickle, and of course the springbok.

NATIONAL SYMBOLS IN SOUTH AFRICA

South African history has shown that national symbols can be extremely divisive, especially where particular ethnocultural groups perceive their own symbols to be threatened by the introduction of new national symbols. In this country, the adoption of the most important national symbols (particularly the flag and anthem) since the era of Union has been characterised by conflict, deep political and cultural divisions, and lasting feelings of resentment (Saker 1980).

At no stage were the majority of the population (who were excluded from the political power structures and franchise) publicly consulted about the nature and composition of the national symbols. With the exception of the fauna and flora emblems and the geographical references in the anthem (which are symbols shared by all inhabitants of Southern Africa), no symbolism relevant to the politically marginalised groups in South Africa has been reflected in the present symbols. Black people had constantly voiced their opposition to the adoption of a flag in addition to or instead of the Union Jack before a decision was taken, but their petitions had no success.

Although it has always been clear that the flag and anthem have not been recognised as their own by the majority of South Africans, the issue has been avoided by politicians. Yet by the middle of the eighties, the writing was on the wall and it became clear to many observers that a reconsideration of the present symbols could not be avoided. In one of the largest investigations to reveal the untenability of the apartheid system, the HSRC's Investigation into Intergroup Relations of 1981-1985, the need for unifying symbols was specifically identified:

> Research ... showed that social identification can operate at more than one level, and that identification at the ethnic level does not exclude the possibility of identification with a broader South African order. But when the aim is wider involvement and inclusion at a higher level of identification, attention must also be paid to common loyalty, which immediately gives rise to the question of shared symbols: Society as a whole will necessarily have to decide on a set of common symbols in order to accomplish involvement. This matter gains in importance when it is remembered that, to those groups currently excluded from participation, many of the existing symbols represent exclusion rather than inclusion (HSRC 1987:161).

In an HSRC publication of 1988 (Marais 1988), dealing with perspectives on the future, the country's need for universal symbols with which to identify within a single, accommodating constitutional framework, was again stressed. 'From a socio-psychological perspective, such a dispensation demands (at the micro-level) identification with an all-embracing South Africanism notwithstanding group differences at the meso-level' (Marais 1988:299). Symbols such as a national mission, the constitution, the official national symbols, the Office of the State President, the defence force, national monuments and public commemorative holidays are mentioned as obvious examples in the article. Marais maintains: 'Unfortunately, many of these are now experienced as symbols of division' (*ibid.*).

THE SEARCH FOR ALTERNATIVE SYMBOLS

In choosing new symbols, most role players feel that care should be taken to avoid antagonising significant sectors of the population, as this will defeat the essential purpose of promoting unity. With regard to the country's symbols, names and monuments, the ANC's general policy document, adopted in 1992, states: 'It is not our goal to substitute one form of hegemony with another, but to replace the present monopolistic representation of one section of the population by an appropriately diverse and balanced range.' However, Mr Fitzroy Ngukana, cultural representative of the PAC, is adamant that if symbols such as 'Die Stem' and monuments are not holistically representative of 'the majority of Africans', they are unacceptable to the PAC.

Even the influential Federasie van Afrikaanse Kultuurverenigings (FAK) states that the present national symbols do not have any symbolism representing the experience of people who are not white (in Malan 1993:41). Many leaders of cultural groups (notably also a number of eminent Afrikaners) have already indicated that they would be prepared to accept new symbols in the interest of

197

forging unity, as long as they could also use those existing symbols which are of importance to them but which will be without national status.

Whether the political situation in the country lends itself to the introduction of new national symbols in the near future is another question. Some observers (such as linguist Dr Neville Alexander) feel that divisions in South African society run too deep: 'We shall have to wait for the impulses towards the unity of our people to become the dominant ones before we shall be able to speak sensibly about national symbols' (1992:10).

Although this should be further researched, there are clear indications that groups to the right and left of the political spectrum in South Africa have such strong feelings about particular symbols that, if their reservations are not accommodated wisely, this may lead to a repetition of the drawn-out conflict and segmentation experienced in the past. Schlemmer (1992) found a considerable conflict potential in the introduction of a new national flag and anthem, the changing of existing place names to African names and the substitution of Afrikaans with an African language. As regards 'cultural' conflict surrounding symbols, Schlemmer, however, feels that the majority-based political leaders have a choice, because demands from their supporters for 'retribution' are not as strong as the case for material issues (1992:6).

Finding symbols that are truly representative and unifying will indeed be no mean task. The revered symbols of those sections of the population without a formal Western heraldic tradition should obviously also be taken into account (Brownell 1984). An indigenous African tradition of heraldry has been developed, with features such as the skin shield, spear and knobkierie, and animals such as the leopard and elephant. These emblems may be incorporated in a flag design, as has been done in various other African countries.

OTHER SYMBOLS OF NATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE

A considerable number of symbols can be described as 'national' in the sense that they have a particular symbolic value for a large section of the population and are often used to represent 'our' country. The promotion of such symbols, particularly those of a broadly cultural nature, may contribute significantly to the process of nation/state-building. Some of those which merit most attention are briefly discussed below.

Elements related to conservation and commemoration include monuments, memorials, landmarks and regions, musea, galleries, parks and sanctuaries. The many problems in this area relating to symbolic representation which is acceptable to the majority of the population were pointed out during the large conference on cultural conservation in 1988 (see Coetzee and Van der Waal 1988). Certain buildings are also seen to represent aspects of the state. The Union Buildings and parliamentary building are the symbols of state power in this country.

The springbok and the protea are the two national emblems most often used by the various sports bodies, yet for many observers the springbok has also become a symbol of apartheid exclusivity. Apart from the national flora and fauna emblems a number of other nature emblems are of national importance. Emblems such as the leopard, cheetah, eland, lion, disa, baobab and aloe are frequently used in South Africa.

The fact that the latest set of South African currency designs mainly include fauna and flora and industrial designs, replacing the heads of Jan van Riebeeck (on bank notes) and state presidents (on coins), indicates an attempt to make these designs more acceptable and 'neutral'. Shared symbolism should also be related to postage stamp designs. Because stamps are used and collected extensively, their designs play an important role in portraying symbolic formations in a particular country.

Names are reflections of identity and a shared heritage. A rich historical heritage is represented by many San and Khoekhoen place names (Kakamas, Prieska, Knysna, Augrabies), although these inhabitants have disappeared. Already a number of indigenous equivalents are used for the official names of some cities: iGoli/Gauteng (gold) for Johannesburg, Tshwane (small monkey) for Pretoria, Thekwini (of the bay) for Durban, Mangaung (place of the cheetah) for Bloemfontein, etc.

The symbolism of cities and geographical representations includes a simplified map of the country, which is immediately recognised as Southern Africa. Table Mountain is one of the most popular and internationally known symbols. Internationally, 'Pretoria' is used to identify the South African government, with mainly negative connotations. Especially since the 1976 uprisings, 'Soweto' has come to represent the suppressed black community coexisting with the (white) City of Gold, Johannesburg.

Political, cultural, scientific and other leaders and heroes express and embody the ideals and values of any country: Britain has its Churchill, France its De Gaulle, the USA its Martin Luther King, and so forth. In its turn, South Africa has also produced leaders who have had international recognition to the extent that some have received the Nobel Prize. Yet someone like Chief Albert Luthuli, a Nobel Prize winner, is seldom honoured publicly in this country. A large variety of people have helped shape South African society: Chaka, Gandhi, Smuts, Tutu, Gordimer and many others. Their legacy should be shared by all South Africans by way of biographies, commemorations, monuments, postage stamp designs, geographical names and other means.

Many debates and investigations on the choice and names of public holidays indicate the symbolic value of this type of commemoration. In view of the strong opposition that has been expressed against some of the existing public holidays and the probability that they will have to be replaced when entering a new constitutional dispensation, special attention should be paid to this category. Festivals, religious and other commemorations may play a powerful unifying role. Occasions such as national and international eisteddfods and music competitions, the Cape New Year carnival and the Grahamstown Arts Festival are opportunities for sharing cultural products. Turning to sports, the Comrades Marathon has become one of the most successful unifying events on the calendar and in 1993 was directly linked to the promotion of peace.

Cultural symbols also include myths and legends, dress, artefacts, folk symbols, customs and traditions. Tribal warriors in full regalia, performing war dances, have been depicted internationally for many years and myths surrounding Chaka have been related far beyond this country's borders.

Art symbols include works of art, aesthetic designs and styles, popular culture, and so forth. Unique styles such as the Ndebele designs and the Cape Dutch architecture have been developed over the years in this country. South Africa has contributed substantially to international popular music. Art and artists have the ability to transcend cultural barriers easily, because people identify with 'our' artists and art forms. Paul Simon's promotion of local music styles internationally, the awarding of the Nobel Prize to Nadine Gordimer and the Grahamstown Arts Festival are examples of powerful unifying cultural forces and events.

Religious symbols obviously have a significant unifying function. With Christians numbering 77 per cent or more of the South African population the dove — employed as a symbol by the National Peace Accord — is a symbol not only of peace, but also of the Holy Ghost.

THE PROCESS OF SOCIOCULTURAL RECONSTRUCTION

The quest for unifying symbols can succeed only if it is situated within an equally symbolic effort at sociocultural reconstruction (see the areas surveyed in *Culture in another South Africa,* Campschreur & Divendal 1989). South African society is characterised by appalling cultural imbalances after decades of institutional apartheid, social engineering and hegemonic cultural production. Entire communities have very little to show of significant material culture, that is, those artefacts, facilities and memorabilia which can promote a sense of identity, pride and belonging. Moreover, these communities have been, and still are, excluded from cultural power structures, resources and even the most basic facilities such as libraries. Nothing less than a comprehensive process of sociocultural reconstruction is needed if the marginalised sections of the community are to be empowered.

The eighties saw an increasing resistance to the cultural imperialism that has stretched over centuries: from the westernisation promoted by missionaries, the influence of Afrikaner nationalism and the British 'way of life', to the present stranglehold applied by intellectuals, elite artists and organised cultural bodies.

The present cultural structuring of South African society is geared towards the privileging of those in positions of power. Cultural 'master codes' of race, class, gender, literacy, aesthetics and historicism are employed for the marginalisation of entire sections of society, often in subtle ways (Boonzaier & Sharp 1988). Well-established processes of canonisation have ensured that 'African' and 'popular' cultural forms have been stereotyped so negatively that they are often seen as insignificant and not worthy of conservation. In any case well-known typologies of Western and African culture are increasingly losing their validity in the light of movement from rural to urban, industrial to post-industrial, and 'folk' to 'mass', cultural forms (Tomaselli 1988).

Culture, 'that which makes life worth living' (T. S. Eliot), can empower even those sections of the community which are isolated from power structures. For a transforming process of reconstruction to affect the lives of ordinary people and infuse them with meaning, a basis such as massive literacy programmes and the acknowledgement and promotion of the various African languages, symbols and oral traditions will be necessary.

Many critics complain about the absence of a comprehensive conservation policy and a completely one-sided policy on museums, monuments and memorials. In a situation in which only 3 per cent of the existing 'official' monuments and memorials commemorate things of importance to people who do not have a white skin, the need for drastic reconstruction is obvious. It is equally clear that the emphasis should not be exclusively on buildings and monumental structures. Alternatives such as the preservation of regions and landmarks (especially grave sites) should be explored. Obviously the stereotypical presentation of indigenous culture as tribal, unsophisticated and even primitive may no longer be tolerated.

The acknowledgement and promotion of symbols at regional level may also play a significant unifying and reconstructive role. Reconstruction will only succeed, however, if it is based on creative cultural programmes aimed at community involvement and participation. Culture should in no way be separated from everyday life.

REFERENCES

ALEXANDER, N. 1992. New national symbols for South Africa. *South Africa in the Nineties. Prospects for Solutions.* 1(2):8-10.

BOONZAIER, E. & SHARP, J. (eds). 1988. *South African keywords: The uses and abuses of political concepts.* Cape Town: David Philip.

BROWNELL, F.G. 1984. Heraldry in South Africa. *Optima*, 32(4):138-146.

CAMPSCHREUR, WILLEM & DIVENDAL, JOOST (eds). 1989. *Culture in another South Africa.* London: Zed.

CERULO, K.A. 1989. Sociopolitical control and the structure of national symbols: An empirical analysis of national anthems. *Social Forces.* September, 68(1):76-99.

COETZEE, I. & VAN DER WAAL, G-M. (eds). 1981. *Kultuurbewaring. Veranderende konteks en uitdagings. Verrigtinge van die Suid-Afrikaanse konferensie oor kultuurbewaring. Kaapstad 6-10 Junie 1988/The conservation of culture: Changing context and challenges. Proceedings of the South Africa Conference on the conservation of culture. Cape Town, 6-10 June 1988.* Pretoria: Conference organisers.

HUMAN SCIENCES RESEARCH COUNCIL. 1987. *The South African society. Realities and future prospects.* Westport: Greenwood.

MALAN, C.W. (ed). 1993. *Present national symbols of the Republic of South Africa.* Unpublished HSRC report.

MARAIS, H.C. 1988. From destructive conflict to negotiations. In: Marais, H.C. (ed). *South Africa: Perspectives on the future.* Pinetowm: Owen Burgess, 307-330.

SAKER, H. 1980. *The South African flag controversy 1925 - 1928.* Cape Town: Oxford University Press.

SCHLEMMER, L. 1992. Conflict in the new South Africa: class, culture and power. *Information Update.* December:4-7.

TOMASELLI, K. (ed.). 1988. *Rethinking culture.* Bellville: Anthropos.

CHAPTER 19

Response to comment by Zulu, Boshoff, Latakgomo, Friedman and Malan

Herbert Vilakazi

What I attempted in my chapter was simply to identify the fundamental problem facing South Africa, which must first be dealt with and solved before communal reconciliation can take place. Other people may, of course, formulate the problem in a different way. Such differing views are debatable but I am not going into that now. I merely intend correcting some misinterpretations of my chapter.

I shall begin with Friedman's chapter, which is an honest attempt to confront the issues I have raised. In the chapter I stress that the communal groups living in South Africa today namely whites, Indians, coloureds, and the community — referred to at various times as 'Kaffirs', 'Natives', 'Bantus' and now 'Blacks' (Africans) — are 'eminently a product of white supremacy in South African history'. Identity is a product of history, not of nature. We should be attempting to influence historical events in our country, in such a way as to make possible a more humanistic, healthier identity or identities. What we should erase from our history are discriminatory, or racist identification or identities. We want to influence events in such a way that no one will be forced to identify himself for the purpose of deriving benefits in the economy, in politics, in religion and in culture, as white, Indian, coloured, or black. We should only be identified as 'Africans' — which is derived from the name of the continent we inhabit.

Nowhere in the chapter do I argue that this should be accomplished through force — that whites, Indians, and coloureds should 'submerge' or 'surrender' their identities. We are talking about a humane forging of identities, in the process of which colour or race shall no longer feature, in the spirit articulated by James Baldwin in the dictum: 'It is no longer important to be white — thank heaven — the white face is no longer invested with the power of this world; and it is devoutly to be hoped that it will soon no longer be important to be black' (Baldwin 1962:215).

I also foresee a resurgence of African nationalism in our country. White supremacists, in this country, as well as white liberals and leftists, and members of Western powers, have concluded in recent years that African nationalism is highly dangerous and undesirable in South Africa, and that everything should be done to stifle, disorganize, frustrate and oppose it. These forces have, for the present, succeeded in purging African nationalism from the language of the ANC.

This stifling of African nationalism, and the many devious efforts to disorganize it (of which violence among Africans, particularly the violence of weapons and of words between the ANC and IFP, is one), *is a very artificial attempt to avoid dealing with the deep wound in the psyche of the masses of African people.*

I argue that we should not fear and frustrate African nationalism, since in our present sociohistorical system it is inevitable, healthy and corrective. What we most urgently need is the emergence of wise, humanistic and realistic African leaders who can effectively guide and channel this nationalism in a healthy, humanistic direction. *We shall still pay a heavy price for the current tricks being played to frustrate and stifle this process in the African community: when it does re-emerge, as surely it must, we shall find ourselves with a consuming, powerful, angry movement, without proper, wise, humanistic leadership to guide it in a healthy, humanistic direction.*

As has been stressed, nationalism is inevitable at certain stages of history, given certain circumstances. It has a democratic content and, in that sense, it has to be supported. But there is a very thin line between its democratic content, on the one hand, and its leaning towards reactionism and danger, on the other hand. Nationalism is like a fire, which, when well controlled, can heat our food, and solve many other problems for us, but when not controlled, can burn the house down. It is only the sound, humanistic, well developed leadership that can make this thin line clear to the aggrieved people, and influence them to move in a constructive direction. The essence of the means to stifle African nationalism, in our case, consists of efforts to frustrate the rise of such leadership. We are being historical fools.

I am aware that the present balance of power between the white community and the African community is still unfavourable for African majority rule: hence the negotiating process, and hence the inevitability of the 'interim' plans for coalition rule (see Vilakazi 1992:59-60). In the chapter, I stress the danger of restricting the act of creating the 'interim', negotiated phase to the Western culture elites.

A word on the response of Professor Carel Boshoff (IV). Hegel characterized tragedy as conflict, not between right and wrong, but between right and right. I appreciate the honesty of the Boshoff contribution and the attempt to grapple boldly with the major issues raised in my chapter. Whatever errors I see in their argument are 'historically determined', rather than sleight of hand logic. They argue, for instance, that 'categorical race discrimination and its outcome were not based on an antihumanistic semi-animal perception, but on some kind of value conservatism'. We should point out that the 'antihumanistic semi-animal perception' also belongs to the sphere of 'values'.

The contributions of Dr Malan and Mr Latakgomo are more or less independent formulations of our historical problem; they do not really concern my views.

I end with Dr Zulu's contribution. Either Dr Zulu did not understand what I wrote at all, or he must have scanned the chapter rapidly and missed the substance of my argument.

First, I clearly state that 'a distinction must be made between the creation merely of a nation-state and the creation of a *democratic* nation-state. The democratic nation-state is a latecomer in history.' How then does Dr Zulu arrive at the conclusion that 'Vilakazi collapses democracy and the nation-state into one entity'?

Second, Dr Zulu writes that 'Vilakazi constructs South African society on the basis of genetic biological attributes.' I specifically state that the existing communal groups in the country are 'eminently a product of white supremacy in South African history.' It should be noted, too, that I said nothing about 'genetic biological attributes'.

Third, my focus throughout the chapter is on the 'masses of ordinary members' in the white, Indian, coloured and African communities, not on exceptional individuals, or on elites. No one doubts that there have been outstanding fighters for freedom in the ANC, from the white, Indian and coloured communities. My focus, however, is on the masses of the members of these communities. It would be a strange person indeed, who would deny that the masses of ordinary members of the white, Indian, and coloured communities are not members or supporters of the ANC, PAC, AZAPO or IFP, and that it is only the few, exceptional individuals from these communities who are active in the liberation movement.

How Dr Zulu can conclude that 'Vilakazi wants to get a dig at the sunset clause, at those organizations which purport to be non-racial and at the negotiations process' is beyond my comprehension.

REFERENCES

BALDWIN, James. 1962. *Nobody knows my name*. New York: Delta.

VILAKAZI, H.W. 1992. 'On negotiations', *Tribute*. November 1992.

CHAPTER 20

Nation-building through pluralism? An Inkatha perspective

Gavin Woods

INTRODUCTION

Now that the system of apartheid has eventually succumbed to the collective forces that opposed it, it seems natural that the absence of legislated racial segregation compels a 'coming together' under one popular government in South Africa — from which point new equalisation processes can coalesce all into a single nationhood.

Political organisations such as Inkatha sometimes perturb such hopefuls, not only by remaining distant from the current nation-building hype, but even more so when suggesting that the opposite experience of civil war is also a possibility.

Does Inkatha have a considered basis for this contention and, what are its particular positions regarding possible unity in the future South Africa? Serious observation of the Inkatha brains trust and a critical examination of its enduring arguments indicate that it has applied its collective mind to these issues.

Such analysis of Inkatha confirms that strongly felt positions of principle and carefully contemplated strategies are part of its political make-up. In fact, together these portray an unusual degree of thematic consistency, regarding both the lengthy period over which Inkatha has held its basic positions and strategies, and also the extent to which these positions are accordant.

The most persistent of Inkatha's themes from 1975 onwards concerned strategies to make apartheid unworkable and policies through which to replace apartheid with a sustainable democracy. A critical subtheme was always to keep these strategies and policies sensitive to the possibilities of a violent transition.

To this end, Inkatha has always defended a strong pluralistic perspective, and urged that competing forces and distrustful and threatened minorities be recognised and accommodated through constitutional arrangements for power sharing and protection. Such a constitution is believed possible only if produced through a majority consensus — with negotiated compromise being more important than the transitional time frame.

In recognising the diverse nature of South African society, Inkatha has held up pluralism, largely in the form of federalism, as the most appropriate approach towards future sociopolitical stability. It has long contended that this is the system best able to accommodate plural entities and their interests thereby defusing otherwise destructive tensions.

A fuller grasp of this reasoning is necessary in order to understand where Inkatha stands on the issue of nation-building in South Africa. It is also necessary in so far as it counters the critics who claim that Inkatha has no interest in national reconciliation and a single nationhood — because of a supposed narrow regional interest.

Such perceptions appear insubstantial when assessed against particular long-standing Inkatha positions and stances. These include its resistance to KwaZulu's becoming independent from the rest of the country; its urging that all black South Africans proclaim their right to remain as such; its wish to unify South Africa through federalism and its rejection of confederalism and succession as options.

Together, these positions tend to convince one that Inkatha does wish that a South African nationhood would evolve. One that all could come to subscribe to, but not one that would wish individuals to forgo their subnational or other group identities.

To explain Inkatha's views on a future South African nationhood and its possibilities, it is therefore necessary to elaborate on its central positions and strategies as they relate to pluralism in a national context. This is done by examining several interrelating perspectives.

AN UNDERSTANDING OF PLURALISM

Pluralism, whether referred to in a general sense or as an evaluative form of government, has never been more than a partially fulfilled ideal. As a political sociological theory it seeks the impossible in terms of equality for all interest groups in a society, especially where this concerns the distribution of political power.

Nevertheless, it has been the striving to attain this ideal that in many countries has produced practical measures of pluralism — which by their nature underpin liberal democracy. These are essentially a variety of constitutional means for discouraging domination over those who do not wish to be dominated.

Pluralism as a form of government opposes the ideological extremes of known political systems. On one hand, it considers highly participatory democracies to be impractical and potentially anarchical and on the other believes highly centralised governments to be inherently undemocratic and open to statism — in other words, trying to foster an all-embracing value system in order to survive. This conflicts with pluralism which is based on the liberal ideal of freedom and a democratic ideal incorporating the principle that sovereignty should rest with the individual.

Pluralism recognises and accommodates social cleavages and other divisions, whether natural or institutional. Examples around the world demonstrate how it embraces existing racial, ethnic, tribal, linguistic, ideologic, cultural, religious, business, worker, and territorially based components, even as these are horizontally stratified by socio-economic classes. The position taken is that such sectors should not be spurned as undesirable social constructs or as the false consciousness of self-proclaimed groups.

Plural forces are seen to interact in society in ways that promote and protect their respective interests and values, and ultimately in ways which try to gain influence through formal power structures such as political parties. It is the degree to which the agendas of these political parties coincide with the interests of the social and socio-economic divisions, that determines the form and extent of pluralism necessary in a society.

Where these divisions are not too pronounced, as is the case with a number of Western countries, a particular range of 'liberal democratic' constitutional measures which directly support pluralism tend to suffice. These would include multipartyism, regular elections, proportional representation, bicameralism, a bill of classic and second-generation rights and an independent judiciary. These all provide for diversity in a society.

In countries where the population is more diverse and complex, where divisions run deeper and where antagonism and paranoia exist, pluralism requires that even greater opportunities be provided for group representation, power sharing and protection. Two such political systems which pluralism might consider are federalism, which will be discussed later in this paper, and the lesser known consociationalism.

Consociationalism, as an extended form of democracy, is designed for plural societies which have the potential for conflict. It calls for government through a grand coalition of political leaders of all the significant groups — where decision making occurs through concurrent majority rule — without giving overriding or veto powers to any one party. The other relevant features as far as the member constituencies of the coalition are concerned are their high administrative autonomy and their proportional representation at central level.

So whereas consociationalism is a matter of processes which accommodate plurality, federalism is more structure-based to accommodate devolved autonomous power arrangements.

No matter what form or permutation it takes, pluralism accepts that there are a multitude of competing truths in society, and this acceptance promotes tolerance and compromise leading to a balancing of interests. Therefore the power exercised by the state tends to be legitimate rather than coercive, with the state itself being more of an honest broker which takes account of the conflicting demands made on it by different sections of society. Pluralism is therefore an approach that seeks to move a society away from conflict and towards reconciliation and stability. This in turn provides possibilities for an overarching nationhood to emerge.

PLURALISM IN THE MODERN WORLD'S EXPERIENCE

The history of mankind distinctly shows the ways that territorial and subterritorial societies arrive at situations where interest-related power balances demand to be readdressed. In such situations, where serious inter- and intrasocietal animosities exist, where the power stakes for winners and losers are high, and where there is deep-seated mistrust between them, divisions are inevitably exacerbated. This often makes for conflict and even for war.

Despite the powerful new democratisation forces and the emerging universal morality, these conflicts have continued to occur in the twentieth century. Even interventions by the international community usually fail to prevent such situations arising, or to resolve these once they have taken root. Successful resolution usually takes place through new political arrangements that are structural and are agreed to by the competing forces.

But consensus and conflict have not been the only alternatives that societies in transition have had to face. A frequent middle option has been the suppression of opposing interests but, as the history of the twentieth century shows, this rarely allows for stability in strongly plural societies. Instead it is degenerative, because suppressed interests find ways of reasserting themselves. Apartheid is an example of this — where even extreme coercion, discriminatory legislation, sophisticated propaganda, divide-and-rule tactics, physical enforcement and patronage practices failed to deny others their rights and interests indefinitely.

The global lesson could not be any clearer concerning the will and ability of group interests, such as religion, ethnicity, race, nationalism, idealogy and class to resist integration or domination. Nation-building efforts that attempt to impose fundamental changes on the character of a population will invariably fail.

INKATHA'S PLURALISTIC TRADITIONS

Inkatha has long argued that South Africa can only become united and remain so through a constitution which incorporates appropriate pluralism. This is what made pluralism the consistent rationale around which Inkatha formulated its key positions and strategies — in particular those that sought to accommodate diversity and defuse intergroup tensions in South Africa.

Recognition of divisions: As a general position, Inkatha has always recognised the heterogeneous character of South African society, its complex plurality and the existence of its minorities. It has urged that these should not be ignored in any future dispensation. This understanding features in virtually all its policy formulations and its wider analysis of human and demographic situations.

The balkanisation of South Africa: Pursuing regional independence or seceding from South Africa has never been an Inkatha option. Inkatha contends that interplural reliance and the collective contribution to the country's wealth advocates that all South Africans should have a future together. Through this and its opposition to apartheid ideology, Inkatha chose to face strong Nationalist Party Government victimisation when preventing independence from being given to KwaZulu.

The armed struggle: First in 1978 and then throughout the 1980s Inkatha publicly disagreed with the armed struggle as it said it would exacerbate tensions and further polarise sectors of the population.

Politicisation of township youth: This was a development Inkatha expressed concern about throughout the 1980s. It foresaw that this would cause a deepening of divisions between black and white and also between black and black. It also warned that this could produce a generation of people who would remain a destabilising factor even in a post-apartheid era.

Economic sanctions: Inkatha opposed economic sanctions because of its potential to add to unemployment in the already disadvantaged communities. Growing poverty would then increase wealth differentials, criminality and general frustration.

Multipartyism: Full multipartyism has been an ideal promoted by Inkatha from the time of its inception. Inkatha publicly expressed its appreciation when the country's other two major political organisations came to acknowledge the importance of multipartyism.

Buthelezi Commission: The Buthelezi Commission, which was initiated by Inkatha's president in 1981, sought to bring all sectors of KwaZulu/Natal together in a way that did not threaten their separate identities. It investigated ways through which a non-racial government system could be created for the region and it recommended a system of consociationalism.

Bill of rights: The need for a bill of rights, despite being rejected by other major parties right up until the late 1980s, was promoted by Inkatha from the beginning of that decade. Inkatha regarded such a bill as necessary to protect individuals and their right to associate freely in the plural situation.

A national convention: In the 1980s Inkatha repeatedly called for an all-party national convention as an inclusive means of peacefully negotiating the country's future.

Tricameral constitution: The introduction of the tricameral constitution in 1983 was actively contested by Inkatha because it was seen as divisive and a way of extending the period of white dominance.

Political campaigns: In the mid-1980s there were a number of politically initiated campaigns such as the 'People's War', 'Ungovernability' and 'Liberation first, education later'. Inkatha protested that these would exacerbate tensions and cause divisions and violence in the communities where promoted.

Federalism: Federalism was alluded to by Buthelezi as far back as 1973, as being appropriate for South Africa's plurality.

KwaZulu/Natal Indaba: Inkatha participated in and subscribed to the recommendations of the KwaZulu/Natal Indaba in 1986 which proposed power sharing and group accommodation across both a political and a social spectrum. This was a serious exercise in negotiating a political system for a state in a proposed future federation.

The JEA: The Joint Executive Authority is a decision-making body created as a joint initiative between the Inkatha-run KwaZulu Government and the Natal Provincial Administration. This arrangement allows these two authorities to deal with concerns of mutual interest to the benefit of the region as a whole.

The Afrikaner: Another position Inkatha held was that whites, (and in particular the Afrikaner,) had to be part of the solution to the country's problems notwithstanding their direct or indirect role in perpetuating apartheid. Inkatha argued that to punish or alienate them would turn them into a fearsome minority with considerable capacity to destabilise the country.

Non-racial negotiations: Inkatha rejected requests by the South African Government in the nineteen-eighties to engage them in negotiating a modified political dispensation for the country. Inkatha stated that all constituencies, including those of banned political organisations, had to be included in any such negotiations.

CODESA

At the start of CODESA, Inkatha voiced concern over three issues which other participant parties were prepared to disregard. The first was Inkatha's reluctance to sign the declaration of intent until its wording did not exclude federalism as a future constitutional option. Secondly, was that not enough was being done to coax groupings such as the Conservative Party, the Pan African Congress, AZAPO and the KwaZulu Government into the process. And thirdly, that the process resist placing speed before quality consensus making.

The post-CODESA multiparty negotiating process: Inkatha began its participation in this new forum by expressing satisfaction with the greater inclusivity and representativeness of the new forum. This was short-lived, when bilateral discussions between the ANC and South African Government produced bilateral agreements. Inkatha immediately warned that this constituted a power bloc which had the means to impose its will on the process at the expense of full debate, and whatever else constitutes real negotiation.

Inkatha claimed later that this is what precipitated its withdrawal from the forum as it tried to block a situation of big winners, big losers and possible conflict.

The above selection of Inkatha positions is meant to demonstrate the strength and consistency of Inkatha's resolve that South Africa should remain a single country — but one in which people would not be pushed to subscribe to a single identity. This tends to dispute more recent accusations that Inkatha acts from expediency and self-interest when objecting to the lack of inclusivity in decision-making and to the exclusion of pluralism.

AN INKATHA UNDERSTANDING OF PLURALISM THROUGH FEDERALISM

Some of the first pro-federalism arguments from Inkatha are to be found in speeches made by Buthelezi between 1974 and 1979. During the following six years these arguments were incrementally built upon in the course of internal debate within the organisation.

Then came the KwaZulu/Natal Indaba in 1986 where Inkatha was at the forefront of customising a federal model to suit the plural peculiarities of that region. After that Indaba Inkatha continued to develop its federal model in keeping with the unfolding situation in the country and in line with the liberal democratic experiences of successful plural societies elsewhere. In September 1992, through the KwaZulu Government, a draft constitution for the State of KwaZulu/Natal (in a Federal South Africa) was proposed. It was based on the principle of subsidiarity which meant that substantial exclusive powers would be held by second and third tiers of government. In addition there were various other constitutional means through which the respective integrities of all legitimate internal diversities could be maintained — through the entrenchment of both personal and territorial autonomies.

The basis of Inkatha's pro-federalism arguments includes an analysis of South African peculiarities and of international experiences. In this latter vein it appears that Buthelezi/Inkatha's twenty years' feel for the political dynamics in plural societies was ahead of that of much of the world — including Eastern Europe, parts of Western Europe and South America.

All in all there has been a spectacular reversal in the world trend towards the creation of nation states and of statism. The incontrovertible lesson was that these former 'one government, one territory, one people' states all came to employ paternalistic and oppressive totalitarian measures — for which profuse moral justification was always given. The new global movement towards liberal aspects of democracy and constitutionalism in the twentieth century has now made it more difficult for governments to employ force and coercion to engineer diverse societies into becoming integrated under a united patriotism and single nationhood.

Today, the principal form of state and of political organisation is becoming federalism. It is in fact a revolution which, in conjunction with the advent of new liberal democracies, has produced a vast spectrum of vertical arrangements for power distribution. These arrangements essentially aim at bringing the government within the reach of those it serves and protects.

Whereas the United States' federation was formed in the eighteenth century and the Swiss and Canadian in the nineteenth century, in the twentieth century over 50 of the world's 150 political sovereign states are now either federations or have incorporated significant federal principles into their constitutions. Besides federal-type arrangements in Western European countries such as Spain, Germany and Belgium, it is now apparent that pressures are compelling a devolution of central political power in countries such as Italy, France and maybe even Britain. This is happening despite the large-scale economic regionalisation between states/countries — which for specific reasons is moving in another direction.

Recognition of diversity within heterogeneous societies, often brought about through rising aspirations for autonomy or self-determination, has brought federalism and particular federal positions into great favour. Worthy of mention is a movement from class-based to ethnic-based politics in a significant number of these societies. For its part Inkatha insists that it is not advocating federalism simply to address ethnic divergence in South Africa. This claim tends to be substantiated if tested against the proposed KwaZulu/Natal Constitution published in September 1992. Here, Inkatha (as the KZG) recommends autonomy for a particular region of the country in which a number of diverse race, ethnic, cultural and linguistic components live.

Inkatha sees these social components, together with their cross-cutting political and economic pluralities, as having an established but interdependent relationship which now constitutes a heterogenous collective, identifying with a common territory. As such, and as is the case with other regions in South Africa, the KwaZulu/Natal region seems to need the right to territorially related self-determination.

THE CRUCIAL ALTERNATE POINT OF VIEW

Politics is of course not only about parties' promoting positions derived from their particular analysis or agendas, but equally as important it is about opposing the views of other parties. In South Africa there is a wide spectrum of powerful views covering almost every area of public concern. Among these Inkatha sees particular standpoints as having the potential to cause wide-spread conflict and maybe civil war. It sees this threat arising from positions that deny sufficient recognition to pluralism.

Here, Inkatha is essentially referring to the view that supports a unitary system of government. This being advocated as the only way to rid the country of apartheid-created divisions and to bring its people together. This view has been supported by the popularised 'nation-building' campaigns which seek the quick creation of a single nationhood for the country.

The unitarists have, however, adopted a number of constitutional accommodations which they proffer as means of preventing excesses by a future centralised government. These include multiparty representation in legislative processes, separation of powers, bicameralism and a bill of rights. Inkatha and others have responded by arguing that in the South African situation this will not prevent a majority party from gaining a dominant position — typical of those that have produced tyrannies elsewhere.

Inkatha insists that the ultimate act of faith can only be measured by the amount of exclusive power which is to be exercised at second and third-tier levels of regionally based government.

In this regard, the unitarist camp in South Africa has in the pre-Constituent Assembly stage made some perfunctory concessions regarding delegated administrative powers and certain concurrent powers to regions, but with no meaningful powers which a future central government could not take away or overrule. As indicated, Inkatha's opposition to the unitarists has as much to do with mistrust as with ideological differences. This mistrust runs extremely deep and concerns the undisclosed intentions Inkatha suspects the unitarists to have. Inkatha expresses concern that its opponents' agenda will for the moment remain obscured by the media's and international community's single-minded approach to elections, a government of national unity and one-stage nation-building.

Like others, Inkatha also sees it essentially as a situation where those who expect to win the first post-apartheid election, wish to fully capitalise on their victory by having a unitary system that offers them the largest power prize possible.

Inkatha is convinced that the unitarists who are hoping to possess a dominant concentration of central power, are aware of the world's growing aversion to such national dispositions and of the emergent neo-pluralism that urges decentralised and devolved forms of power distribution.

With this in mind, Inkatha ponders how the unitarists would circumvent the problematic consequences that are likely to arise. Will the unitarists' government capitulate if such problems bring it growing unpopularity? Or will it do what so many other strongly centralised governments have done in similar predicaments, namely to become increasingly coercive and strategically suppressive in order to retain control? This could well lead to actions outside the constitution, including the suspension of future general elections. Would a new government which for decades has seen itself as 'the government-in-waiting', easily allow itself to be voted out of power as a failure? As Yeltsin has recently demonstrated, justifying drastic, yet patently undemocratic measures to a sympathetic international community, is quite possible.

No matter how much power a unitary constitution gives to a future central government, Inkatha believes that the existing pluralistic dynamics will overextend the coercive and even the oppressive potential of any future government. Conflict is the probable result.

CONCLUSION

Nation building crusades which try to downplay the country's plural divides are likely to be self-defeating — especially if this is driven by particular intent. Even the supportive campaigns to introduce a broadly encompassing civil society will have limited success given the cultural diversity within the country. These efforts as presently mooted stand little chance of contriving the degree of homogeneity necessary to sustain a unitary system of government.

True nations, of an overarching nature, are built on far deeper structural foundations and on profound sociological principles which are made possible by a political environment that offers and sustains accommodation and liberalisation. Engineered short cuts to nation building for political and other reasons could well produce the opposite result of a country torn apart by violent conflict.

The politically related violence which has taken a firm hold in South Africa over the past seven years, maintains a highly ominous presence. It could escalate into something much bigger — possibly even a civil war. The indignation of the media towards the messengers of this possibility causes people to discount the seriousness of its reasoning — notwithstanding its consistent occurrence throughout history.

The initial protagonists in such a civil war might be those who participate in the present political conflict. This might come from violent resistance to a unitary government by Afrikaner and other white communities which are presently showing growing resolve and military capacity. Their possible links to the present military establishment cannot be ignored. Then there are homeland armies, private armies, other armed formations or the remants thereof which could remain sufficiently intact to cause instability.

Inkatha's Zulu constituency could become extremely militant in the face of threat to their sense of nationalism. Despite their conventional military limitations few can doubt their ability to cause serious functional problems for a new government.

All in all, there seems more than enough potential for conflict to prevent the economy from achieving sufficiently well to seriously address contentious disparities. This could cause new frustrations amongst the expectant township youth and the dysfunctional urban communities. Such disillusionment and anger could add a critical dimension to the conflict. Problems compound themselves, feed on each other, and the possibility increases that social divides will further fuel the escalating violence.

Speculation on the possibilities of a civil war, should not only picture another Angolan or Bosnian type situation with clearly identifiable opposing sides each having devastating military weaponry capabilities. In South Africa, a future civil war might be a long lasting low-intensity affair, with irregular flash points, strategic assassinations, bombings, aggressive confrontations and resistance. Whatever form it may take, it is unlikely to produce winners or an environment that is conducive to a new nationhood.

When appraising the stage of fundamental transformation that South Africa has entered, it is therefore important to understand that the multiparty negotiations should be as much an attempt to find a new democratic solution, as to find an alternative to a potential war — a war which would result from strongly felt group interests which were discounted. Inkatha's questioning of whether the urgency of the transition was really so great that it could not have found more time to accomplish greater consensus, may yet come back to haunt the whole country.

This chapter offers an interpretation of Inkatha's understanding of the South African predicament and of why South Africa qualifies as a strong example of a plural and divided society. Against this view and against the world experience it explains Inkatha's belief in federalism as providing the environment necessary for the trust from which nation-building could take place.

217

CHAPTER

21

Forces inhibiting the making of a South African nation

Johann van Rooyen

With the political unification of Italy in 1870, Massim d'Azeglio remarked: 'We have made Italy, now we have to make Italians.' On 28 April 1994 a new South African government is going to be confronted with the challenge of 'making' South Africans out of the tremendous ethnic, racial, ideological, regional and class diversity that characterises this country and which divides its 38 million inhabitants.

Simultaneously the new government will attempt to instil a culture of democracy and tolerance, construct democratic institutions, promote reconciliation while bringing the perpetrators of apartheid crimes to justice. This includes promoting economic growth while actively instituting economic redistribution and restitution. The immensity and inherent contradictions of this task have forced many other divided states facing a similar challenge into an 'either-or' situation: faced with the choice on the one hand of dabbling in democracy while risking political fragmentation, and on the other, with resorting to an authoritarian programme of nation-building at all costs. The majority of emerging divided states have opted for the latter. The result is a consistently poor track record of still-born democracies, human and group rights abuses and a never-ending series of civil wars in most of the divided societies in the post-colonial Third World and in the post-Soviet eastern Europe.

In the territories of the now defunct federations of the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia, attempts to forge a super- or transcended nation or a federation of nations have temporarily succeeded, but only under duress — failing ultimately with disastrous consequences in terms of the loss of human lives and destruction of property, the revival of xenophobic nationalism, and secessions. In Africa there are no fewer than 1 000 distinct ethnic groups of which 250 are in Nigeria alone, and attempts to forge territorial nations in this continent have virtually always been at the cost of democracy. Even highly industrialised societies are subject to failed nation-building experiments: the revival of secessionist movements in Sardinia, the Tyrol and Lombardy in Italy are testimony to the arduous nature of nation-building even in ostensibly ethnically homogeneous countries. This is exemplified by the fact that an Italian from Venice would today typically describe himself as a Venetian first, a European second and an Italian third. Canada's model of binationalism faces the same problem, with one half of the French-speaking Canadians demanding that the province of Quebec be recognised as a distinct society and a founding nation, while the other half is propagating outright sovereignty.

With less than 10 per cent of the world's 180 independent political entities being ethnically homogeneous and constituting 'true' nation states in the sense of the total population of a state sharing the same ethnic/primordial characteristics, the problems associated with politicised ethnicity and nation-building appear formidable. The re-emergence of the demand for self-determination worldwide has resulted in 22 new countries being admitted to the UN over the past two years, causing the UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali to express alarm over the pattern of fragmentation which he claimed could result in 400 economically crippled mini-states at the end of the century.

A considerable number of heterogeneous countries without a dominant ethnic have attempted to forge a territorial nationalism which included as citizens all those who lived within the boundaries of a particular state, irrespective of ethnic origin (and sometimes regardless of a desire to identify with the emerging national identity). While such territorialism has occasionally resulted in the forging of a relatively uniform nation democratically out of ethnically diverse groups (amongst which are the United States, Argentina and Australia), other aspirant nations have had to rely on forced assimilation, genocide or expulsion to achieve the desired homogeneous territorial nationhood. In countries where the dominant ethnic group's identity coincided with the state's political identity, attempts to incorporate other ethnics as part of the nation-building process have often resulted in similarly repressive measures and civil war. However, where the dominant group has refrained from equating its identity with that of the state and has opted to build a nation on the recognition of ethnic heterogeneity, political unity and democracy have often gone hand-in-hand (as in Switzerland).

Where does this leave South Africa? Does the predominance of ethnonationalism in many parts of the world and the many failed and failing nation-building experiments in so many other divided societies necessarily imply that South Africa's prospects of forging a nation out of its diversity without sacrificing democratic ideals are doomed to failure? And is the vision of a united, non-racial, non-ethnic territorial nation incompatible with the reality of ethnic and communal diversity? The argument purported here is that the recognition and accommodation of such diversity (where applicable) are not exclusive of a common South African identity. Indeed, it is likely that the prospects of communal reconciliation and democracy would actually be enhanced by such a recognition, either within or outside of a new constitution. Within the parameters of the constitution, the accommodation of competing nationalisms could result in a binational or even multinational set-up, but if necessary, recalcitrant and reactionary forces of Afrikaner, and perhaps, Zulu nationalism could constitutionally be excluded, possibly by mutual agreement upon secession as a final resort. In other words, democratic nation-building within this scenario implies that alternatives exist for either incorporating all South Africans in the nation-building process, or construction of a nation around only those who have the desire to be part of the process. Either way, it requires the recognition of ethnic diversity as a major component of South Africa's demographic composition.

The task of forging a nation of South Africans out of one of the world's most deeply divided societies is one of the major challenges which will be facing the country's first democratically elected government. The country is burdened with the bitter legacy of officially promulgated racial categories and numerous ethnic groups (some of which are politicised to the extent of demanding the constitutional recognition of their nationhood and propagating a secessionist nationalism), while divisions exist even within ethnic groups as the proponents of conflicting ideologies attempt to outbid one another for hegemony over the group. Furthermore, a considerable degree of overlap of race and class exists in South Africa, which has led to fundamental cleavages between the (largely white) economically advantaged upper stratum and the economically deprived (largely black) majority. In addition, language, cultural, ideological and even regional differences serve to alienate South Africans from each other.

A new government will necessarily undo the NP's relentless efforts over the past 45 years to divide South Africans on the basis of race and ethnicity. It is a challenge of such magnitude that many political analysts are convinced that it cannot be achieved in the near or medium-term future, if at all, or that the political cost would be too high, or that there are more important priorities that should occupy the new government's agenda, such as redistribution of wealth and the construction of an institutional infrastructure that can sustain democracy. Considering the experiences of many other divided societies, South Africa's own diversity and propensity to violence, the odds appear to be stacked against the possibility of democratic nation/state-building.

Nevertheless, the process of nation-building, difficult as it might be, is too important to be put on the back burner in favour of the equally hard-to-attain alternatives of 'institution-building', 'democracy-building' and especially pie-in-the-sky solutions like nation-building through a 'working-class struggle' or through a 'common consumerism'. Ignoring nation-building now would not make the problem of forging a South African nation go away — in fact it begs the question of whether an aspiring nation that cannot be defined even within the vague parameters of territorial nationhood is worth preserving at all, and whether the centrifugal forces should not be allowed naturally to complete the process of disintegration as happened in the former Soviet Union, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, Cyprus, Ethiopia and others. Therefore, it can be argued that if it is worthwhile to create a democratic South African state, it should be worthwhile to forge a common territorial nationalism, with the condition that the country's diversity be acknowledged and if necessary, pursued without those counterproductive forces of rivalling nationalisms.

In modern political tradition the problems concerning nation-building have been conceptualised in terms of the progressive stages of political development: territorial penetration by state power and the construction of an institutional infrastructure, cultural standardisation (for example standard education, creating symbols of national identity), ensuring economic growth and implementing redistribution and welfare policies, and finally, bringing the elites and followers through participation of wider sections of the population. Before addressing the possible accommodation of ethnic diversity as part of the nation-building process, a brief look will be taken at two of the above issues, both of which have unlimited potential to derail even a limited nation-building programme in South Africa.

First, in respect of material disparities South Africans truly constitute two distinct economic entities, not unlike the wealthy north and the destitute south in Italy. The statistics speak for themselves: the 1988 per capita GDP for whites was $6 500, while per capita black incomes were $670; the life expectancy of whites was 73 years and infant mortality 1,3 per cent, but for blacks life expectancy was only 57 years and infant mortality was 5,7 per cent (*The Economist*, 20 March 1993). While the economic deprivation and injustices of apartheid, and an unemployment rate among blacks of 46 per cent, give ample and justifiable cause for the high black expectations of economic redistribution and redress, these expectations might be unrealistically high, considering the fact that the country's GDP has shrunk every year since 1990 and that the recession has left approximately one million whites (in addition to eight million blacks) living below the breadline in 1992 (*Sunday Times*, 29 November 1992). But in the light of the profound socioeconomic racial inequalities it is obvious that references by ANC officials to an 'apartheid tax' and a 'swimming pool tax' should be taken seriously. While higher taxes would be nothing new to the average white taxpayer, it is likely that any attempts to confiscate the savings, pensions and property of whites will meet with determined resistance, and it is doubtful whether even a limited nationalisation of private funds, such as the freezing of personal savings accounts by the Brazilian government, would be a viable option under these circumstances.

Second, the issue of national symbols is divisive and has an even greater potential to disrupt nation-building. For the Quebec nationalists in Canada the French language is a crucial component of their existence as a nation and their cultural survival in North America — more than 200 years of language battles, the unilateral declaration of French as the official language of Quebec and discriminative legislation that forbids English on outdoor signs in that province, are testimony to the salience and emotionality of symbolic issues such as language in an ethnically divided society. While most Afrikaners and many whites are unable to comprehend that their symbols have no moral legitimacy as they were forced upon the South African population in the most undemocratic way by a small minority, their defiant adherence to the current national flag, anthem and official status of Afrikaans is a clear message that the Afrikaner has no intention of overlooking the unilateral destruction of his 'national' symbols. These symbols are among the last physical remnants of the status accorded to the Afrikaner during his 45 years as the dominant power in South Africa, a fact which explains why the Afrikaans Sunday newspaper *Rapport* ominously threatened in 1991 that *'Die Vlag kan vuur word'*. However, it can be expected that the ANC, as the majority party, would, in line with democratic tradition, want to establish its own symbols, implying a new flag, national anthem, monuments, public holidays and heraldry. In addition the names of cities, hospitals and roads will probably be changed to reflect the liberation struggle rather than the history and culture of the Afrikaner. The public display of an AWB flag during a rugby international in Australia and the PAC's slogan of 'one-settler-one-bullet' are indications of extreme positions on this subject, but the divergence that exists even near the ideological centre suggests that widely conflicting positions offer little hope in the near future for an amicable compromise between 'cultural slogans' such as 'Kill a farmer, kill a boer' and 'Ons vir jou Suid Afrika'.

In spite of this rather negative prognosis, it should be emphasised that a considerable degree of consensus reached by the major actors on crucial issues offers hope that a 'minimal nation-building' (Adam & Moodley 1993:219) and communal reconciliation in South Africa might face brighter prospects than in many other divided societies, under certain conditions. Agreement between the ANC and the NP has been reached on constitutional issues such as power-sharing, a bill of rights, proportional representation, the devolution of power, and on economic issues such as a shared vision of a capitalist/social-democratic-orientated economy and a responsible approach to foreign investment and nationalisation. In addition to a highly integrated economy, the majority of people speak or understand at least one of the currently 'official' languages and belong to Christian denominations.

Having argued that the prospects of forging a minimal South African nation incorporating a majority of South Africans of all colours, creeds and cultures, might be better than appears at a first glance, this argument should now be qualified by emphasising that it is not desirable to construct a nation/state out of ethnically diverse groups without their consent and their willingness to be part of that nation. Rupert Emerson's definition of a nation as 'a body of people who feel that they are a nation' emphasises the importance of the subconscious 'feeling' that is crucial to a territorial nationhood in the absence of an ethnic antecedent and where the normal parameters of a nation are lacking (Emerson, 1960:102). These parameters include, according to Anthony Smith, a named human community, a shared historic territory, common myths and historic memories, a mass public culture, a common economy and common legal rights (1991:14). Without the distinct desire on the part of minorities to identify with an emerging state/nation, attempts to forcefully assimilate such groups in forging a nation or even a state have a long record of failure, as illustrated by a list of one-party states and dictatorships, of incidence of ethnocide and genocide, population expulsions, and of protracted civil wars.

An extreme but obvious solution would be to constitutionally exclude reactionary and competing nationalisms from the territorial South African state/nation, but this is an extremely unpopular notion as no government is in favour of voluntarily allowing the dismemberment of its territory and losing a section of its population and economic resources without a very valid reason. The ANC has used this logic when it indicated unambiguously that it would not tolerate the creation of a sovereign white *volkstaat*. Apart from the political and economic arguments against secession (for example the Canadian state faces a loss of 25 per cent of the population and GDP, and 15 per cent of its territory if Quebec secedes), the moral argument supporting this position is also understandable, as it would allow the continuation of apartheid and white domination on a smaller scale.

While the moral argument certainly is valid in respect of the racially exclusive formulation of the demands of the Conservative Party (the Afrikaner Volksfront appears to be undecided), the proposals for a federal unit with a majority of Afrikaners but inclusive citizenship rights, are a different matter. Should the negotiating forum or a new government decide to acknowledge the legitimacy of the latter position, it would amount to the constitutional recognition of ethnic diversity without racism, and would link up with Hermann Giliomee's thesis of binationalism and with the two-nation option of Canada. It would also constitute a safety valve to the potentially explosive aspirations of contemporary Afrikaner nationalism, which now is primarily represented by the right wing and constitutes at least half of the Afrikaner community.

While the ANC at first indicated that it would not consider even an autonomous region in which the political boundaries coincide with ethnic or racial settlement, its position appears to have changed since mid-1993. In June the ANC, in the person of its leader, Nelson Mandela, suggested that the organisation might consider granting 'exclusive powers' to Afrikaner nationalists in a regional dispensation if they could point out the boundaries of such a region, and as long as it was a part of a federal, united South Africa (*Die Burger*, 28 June 1993). Although the ANC later claimed that Mandela was 'partly misinterpreted', it is clear that the possibility of a federally based Afrikaner state was enjoying some consideration.

Afrikaner nationalists today are convinced of the legitimacy of their demand for self-determination and have divorced themselves psychologically from the reality of a new South African dispensation. For Afrikaner nationalism the drive for power and status is not compatible with a common South Africanism and it is doubtful whether it would be possible forcefully to assimilate this group, or to satisfy their demands through the creation of *kultuurparke* (Afrikaner cultural parks), as suggested once by political scientist, Marinus Wiechers (*Vrye Weekblad*, 5 October 1990).

Neither would the threat posed by Afrikaner ethno-nationalism disappear by ignoring it. While the vast majority of the almost 20 000 political deaths in South Africa over the past few years has been the result of communal violence between the ANC and IFP (possibly instigated by elements within the security forces), a potential for even greater violence exists in respect of the position of right-wing Afrikaner nationalism. Running the risk of being accused of scare-mongering, it should be emphasised that the physical ability of the right-wing to resist change is potentially much more lethal. Not only does it enjoy the tacit support of a large part of the security forces, but much of the counterrevolutionary skills and technical know-how of the Botha era are available to the right in the persona of members of the now defunct former securocrat establishment coopted into supporting the *volkstaat* cause. Ironically, these are some securocrat ideologists who devised the theory of the total onslaught and who transformed South Africa into the world's eighth nuclear power during the late 1970s.

In conclusion: Although decades of apartheid and the appropriation of the concept of self-determination by the right wing for its self-serving purpose of white exclusivity and racial chauvinism has made it difficult and even politically incorrect to discuss logically the reality of ethno-nationalism, it can be stated unequivocally that nation- and institution-building in South Africa have to take cognisance of the country's ethnic diversity, if not for moral, economic and ideological reasons, then at least for the purposes of conflict regulation and avoidance of civil war. South Africa, with its diverse racial and ethnic character, at best, faces the likelihood of achieving the status of a minimal territorial nation in the foreseeable future, and even that would only be possible if the constitutional engineers shaping such a nation take cognisance of the destructive potential of scorned and neglected ethnicity.

REFERENCES

ADAM, H. & MOODLEY, K. 1993. *The negotiated revolution.* Houghton: Jonathan Ball Publishers.

EMERSON, R. 1960. *From empire to nation.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

GILIOMEE, H. 1992. Broedertwis: Intra-Afrikaner conflicts in the transition from apartheid. *African Affairs,* 339-364.

HOROWITZ, D. 1985. *Ethnic groups in conflict.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

HOROWITZ, D. 1991. *A democratic South Africa?* Cape Town: Oxford University Press.

SMITH, A.D. 1991. *National identity.* London: Penguin Books.

The Economist, 20 March 1993.

The Globe and Mail, 30 August 1993.

Rapport, 10 November 1991.

Sunday Times, 29 November 1992.

Vrye Weekblad, 5 October 1990.

Die Burger, 28 June 1993.

SECTION

V

KEY SOCIOECONOMIC DETERMINANTS OF DEMOCRATIC NATION-BUILDING IN SOUTH AFRICA

CHAPTER

22

Socioeconomic policy and democratisation in South Africa
Pieter Haasbroek

Response to Haasbroek
Sipho Shabalala

23

The socioeconomic conditions for the democratisation of South Africa
Tito Mboweni

24

Enabling economics: a policy perspective
Henk Langenhoven

25

Economic reconciliation as a precondition for sustained democracy
Servaas van der Berg

CHAPTER 22

Socioeconomic policy and democratisation in South Africa

P J Haasbroek

The political transition in South Africa is widely perceived to be a process of democratisation. It is expected that the 'undemocratic' apartheid system — discriminatory exclusive — will be replaced by a democracy. Defined in terms of its core element, representative government, democracy often features as an end in South African political agendas, as the ultimate goal of the long and painful political struggle. Others view democracy as a means to change the South African society: the powerless will be empowered to restructure the society's institutions and to redistribute its wealth.

Both these positions are inherently flawed. Democracy should not be the goal, but 'a means to reconcile freedom and equality' (Louw 1983:98). The individual's freedom to make decisions and to act, taking the responsibility for it and receiving benefit from the consequences, underlies the institution of political self-determination. By introducing creativity into democracy, the individual or minorities ensure that it will be dynamic. The role of the majority is to provide stability through emphasis on equality: a moral principle.

Although democracy is in essence a political concept which identifies the way in which the decisions of government are correlated with the wishes of its citizens,[1] its two basic norms of equality and freedom also function in the economy. Economic freedom is basically the freedom to contract. This implies the freedom to own property, particularly productive resources, to decide on the use and to benefit therefrom. Because all economic processes can either be free or regulated to varying degrees, economic systems are accordingly identified. Market economies with free enterprise contrast with centrally planned, command systems.

Economic freedom is inextricably linked to economic responsibility and, therefore, governed by the norm of efficiency. The inefficient use of scarce resources is an abuse of economic freedom. Free economic behaviour should, however, also respond to the moral norm of equity, the economic manifestation of equality.

If the balance between the two poles is disturbed by overemphasis of the one, the political outcome will be either a one-party state (when freedom is subordinated) or majority rule (when equality is subordinated). In both instances democracy degenerates into a powerplay where 'either stagnation or despotism sets in' (1983:102).

The impersonal, automatically equilibrating market mechanism is the economy's equivalent of majority rule. The classical perception was that nothing can (and should) be done about the harsh consequences of the market's rule. Economic freedom and efficiency has been promoted at the expense of equity. The opposite happens in a socialist system where the state, representing the workers, has full control over their economic life. Economic freedom is eradicated in the name of equality, which in the harsh reality of the centrally planned economies, became an 'equality of misery'.

The conditions for the success of democracy are so strict that there may be doubt about democracy's usefulness as a means to bring about conciliation. It is so easy and tempting to over-emphasise, to deny or usurp a role, that democratic processes more often than not produce conflict.

If society is divided by severe forms of inequality and, in particular, when the inequality coincides with racial or ethnic differences, as in South Africa, it would be unrealistic to expect that democracy by itself will lead to harmony in intergroup relations: Democratisation under such conditions may even exacerbate the adversarial problems of society.

The complication of firmly entrenched inequalities which undermine the rational basis of democracy, gives rise to the hypotheses of full or complete democratisation.[2] It is anticipated that if all spheres of life, and in particular those characterised by a degree of inequality, are simultaneously and evenly subjected to a process of democratisation, society will gradually be transformed. Differentials will narrow, culminating in an egalitarian state characterised by harmony and solidarity.

To design and implement a strategy of full democratisation will be extremely difficult in most societies. The politically powerful elites have to steer the process of empowerment of the masses, while the wealthy have to agree to redistribution. Affirmative action can be experienced as reverse discrimination. Human rights may become qualified by equality considerations to the point where they lose their judicial protection. And, worst of all, the reactions of economic role players to economic 'democratisation' may bring about structural changes harmful to society's wealth and the processes whereby it is created.

Would an alternative strategy hold any promise if democratisation cannot take place simultaneously and evenly in different spheres? Assuming that the political and economic factors are of paramount importance in the process of democratisation, there are two options open to societies.

One is to embark on the route of democratisation by extending the right of participation in the political processes, and then to use the powers of the representative government to reform the economy. The other is to restructure the economy for the coming political democracy. The first would be the sociopolitical route to full democracy and the other, democracy via socioeconomic change.

The question on the socioeconomic preconditions for a democratic South African society refers to conditions for stability. Louw has indicated that 'equality means stability; inequality, movement' (1983:98). The implication is that an advance towards socioeconomic equality will improve the stability of democracy. The 'improvement' would be (preferably, but not necessarily), the outcome of a process of development. It could also result from a radical redistribution of income, wealth and economic opportunities. However, the two approaches will have markedly different effects on stability.

A question which inevitably arises from the foregoing argument is: if South Africa experiences substantial progress in bringing about greater equality, will its democracy then be stable? The answer has to be conditional: only if democracy can satisfy the society's expectations of its conciliatory role.

There seems to be no escape from the circle of this argument. Democracy could swing between the poles of liberty and equality without having to reach equilibrium. It cannot be proved that democracy will necessarily promote social harmony.[3]

Because of the critical role of the interaction between politics and economics in the stability of a democracy it has been chosen as the central theme of this paper.

DECIDING THE ROLE OF GOVERNMENT IN THE ECONOMY

People strive to achieve an adequate standard of living and quality of life through participation in different forms of voluntary economic co-operation, such as production and trade. They also co-operate in the provision of public services, in which a collective political authority, a government, is established to compel all members of society to contribute to the cost of such services.

The government may be autocratic, or a democratically elected parliament which implements its laws through the state administration. The establishment and exercise of coercive powers is, in all instances, a collective political process. These powers are used to obtain resources for the provision of public services.

The creation of wealth comprises three processes: the allocation of resources, production of goods and services and distribution of income, wealth and economic opportunities. Government can be involved in every one of these processes. But it is not necessarily beneficial to society. Society's wealth can be reduced by governmental action, because the social and economic cost of such action may exceed the social and economic benefits.

How are decisions taken on the nature and extent of governmental involvement in the economy? If the decision-making power is vested exclusively in the hands of an autocratic government, its citizens need not be consulted during the process of policy determination.

In a democracy all citizens entitled to vote have a say in the process of policy determination; they participate through being represented in Parliament. It is assumed that a democratic society will reject policy directions that do not contribute to social welfare. However, is it in accord with reality?

DEMOCRACY AND POLICY DETERMINATION

Owing to the extent and complexity of the government's task in modern societies, policy is determined by democratically elected representatives of the polity, who act on the advice of expert officials experienced in the feasibility, administration and consequences of policies.

Are representatives elected on the basis of the acceptability of their policy proposals? Can they be held accountable for the policy? What remedy does the political process offer for an unsuccessful (unacceptable) policy? The answers to these questions determine how successful the democratic say is in policy determination.

Although politicians take up policy positions according to their expectations of majority support, a specific policy usually has only the support of a part of the electorate. The rest of the polity will to a greater or lesser extent be dissatisfied. They may prefer more or less of a particular public service, but are compelled to adapt their consumption to the level of its provision. They cannot arrange their consumption to suit their personal preferences (Bergstrom & Goodman 1973:280-296).

The number of voters who find a specific policy unacceptable may be a minority, but this is not necessarily so. Different minorities opposing a particular policy may jointly form a majority, but unless they reach a consensus, they cannot work together to change the policy. Consequently, government programmes may be approved under the rule of a majority vote, even though their cost exceeds their social benefits (McKenzie & Tullock 1978:395). For similar reasons a programme may also be rejected, even though it could make a positive contribution to social welfare. This implies that democratic majority decisions will not necessarily maximise society's wealth.

The mechanism of democracy does not effectively motivate voters to obtain information about policies and their possible consequences. Especially when citizens share evenly in the benefits of a particular policy and have little to gain personally, they will not take the trouble to learn more about the policy. Individual voters will intuitively realise that more information will not help them to get the policy changed and that even if it could be changed any personal benefit would be negligible (Downs 1957). The political ignorance of the 'silent majority' is the Achilles' heel of every democracy.

Interest groups, on the other hand, are usually well informed about policies that affect their welfare. This is why they put pressure on politicians and officials to ensure that they will benefit from it. They usually have a disproportionately strong influence on policy decisions. A democracy also has no remedy for this problem of 'vociferous minorities'.

It should be clear that political signals in a democracy, more often than not, are misleading and the outcome is a programme of public services reflecting a combination of political ignorance and special interests. This can hardly be regarded as optimal from the point of view of society's prosperity.

By their nature the demand for collective services cannot be determined by the market. Are there better ways of deciding on the rendering of public services other than by majority vote? One possibility is to vest the responsibility for decision making in a bureaucracy: the expert officialdom of the public service.

DEMOCRACY, BUREAUCRACY AND THE RENDERING OF PUBLIC SERVICES

The elected representatives of society have the power to decide on policy. Officials are appointed to carry it out. In this way the state bureaucracy comes into being.

In most democratic systems the citizens have very little control over the state bureaucracy. It is not usually possible to determine the bureaucracy's functions by means of elections. Since public servants enjoy considerable job security, they do not feel particularly threatened by the discontent of the electorate.

The classical form of public services is provided by a single organisation with coercive powers, used to reduce the problem of 'free-riders'. Other forms of provision are thereby excluded. This monopoly creates a problem: if officials fail to provide the public service in a way that effectively satisfies the citizen's preferences, they cannot turn to another organisation. They also have no direct means of redress.

Those who have monopolistic powers will exploit them, public servants included. They abuse their monopolistic powers in two ways: either by unnecessarily expanding the bureaucracy or by wasting resources (McKenzie & Tullock 1978:412-415). By enlarging the bureaucracy, opportunities arise for promotion, for increasing the official's power, influence and status and for improving their working conditions. This is why most of the plans for an expansion of governmental functions, for new programmes of public services, come from the bureaucracy. Citizens do not vote on these issues.

Public servants can also increase the cost of their functions through higher salaries, new appointments, better working conditions and more fringe benefits. Because there is usually no direct relationship between resources used and output achieved, scarce resources can be wasted.

The possible reaction of the voters (as taxpayers) to bureaucratic inefficiency can simply be ignored. If the public does protest, politicians and officialdom refuse to accept responsibility, or simply blame the system. They may of course join hands to defend their inefficient bureaucratic structures. Such collusion is as harmful, if not more so, than that of businessmen attempting to monopolise a market.

If we assume that politicians and public servants serve the public interest, these forms of inefficiency cannot be explained. However, it is because these people are motivated by self-interest, like everyone else, that exploitation of the government's monopolistic position should be carefully and continuously guarded against. And for this purpose transparency and accountability are the imperatives for democracy.

The monopoly problem can be overcome by giving the voters recourse to multiple tiers of government, so that if their preferences are not satisfied at one tier of government, or if they are in a minority, they will have recourse to another tier (Bish & Ostrom 1973). This solution will not appeal greatly to politicians and public servants, however. They would prefer an extension of the authority of their tier of government to cover the responsibility of the lower tiers, justifying this on the grounds of economies of scale, or the spilling over of social benefits to the areas of jurisdiction of adjoining governments. Obviously their real motives will remain hidden: an extension of the monopolistic power of their tier of government would allow them to pursue their own interests better.

Centralisation reduces the benefits of competition among different forms of government and increases the control that government has over its citizens. It curtails the number and variety of alternative forms of government open to the polity, and increases the cost of moving to the area of jurisdiction of another government (Martin & McKenzie 1975).

Decentralisation or a devolution of power to lower tiers of government will have the opposite effect. The preferences of individual voters for particular policy programmes (programmes of public services) can be better reflected in political decisions, because communities to a large extent will develop exclusively around their own interest and display solidarity in expressing such interests. The political representatives will also be closer to their constituents and will therefore have a better knowledge of their needs.

In the coexistence of different forms of government, checks and balances develop which, to some extent, will help to increase the effectiveness of policy formulation and implementation. Competition will also encourage innovation in the organisation of the bureaucracy. Decentralisation, therefore, offers some opportunity for democracy to exercise control over its bureaucracy. The trend towards monopoly can be counteracted by the creation of more levels of government.

THE SOCIOECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES OF SOUTH AFRICAN SOCIETY

South African society has become increasingly polarised into various opposing factions, and the different forms of polarisation interact to strengthen one another. Consequently, socioeconomic and political relations have become tense and are characterized by suspicion, intolerance and even conflict.

South Africa has been experiencing an economic deterioration that can be expressed in terms of declining economic growth and increasing poverty. It has had a negative impact on the already skewed distribution of income, wealth and economic opportunities. This pattern of distribution of income and wealth is closely related to the structural problem of economic dualism, a problem which has been exacerbated by apartheid.

The majority of the members of any society fall in the lower- and middle-income groups. In South Africa the poorest 40 per cent of the population earns about 10 per cent of the income, while the highest income group, comprising 20 per cent of the population, receives about 65 per cent of the income. The income share of the poorest group is not much lower than that of similar groups in wealthy countries such as the United States of America. The wealthy, however, have a much larger share in South Africa than in the United States. As a consequence, the South African middle group, who make up 40 per cent of the population, only receive about one quarter of the income. In the United States the middle income group is much better off.

The pattern of income and wealth distribution and changes therein affect economic policy decisions. It is anticipated that democratisation in South Africa will strengthen this influence dramatically.

DEMOCRATISATION AND POLICY CHANGE IN SOUTH AFRICA

The liberation of political opposition and the prospect of full participation in political processes announced on 2 February 1990 enabled a radical change in the old apartheid relations. Dividing lines which had been formally entrenched in legislation were lifted and the process of political democratisation began.

However, the extraparliamentary opposition did not suspend its struggle against a socioeconomic and political order which still had so many features of apartheid. In their view, by far the most important of these features are the skewed distribution of income, wealth and opportunities and their political inability to change matters.

South African society has suffered the effects of the deterioration in the economy in the form of lowering standards of living and a poorer quality of life. Given that these effects are interpreted by the institutions which influence public opinion — *inter alia* the communications media, universities, political parties — as the failings of our present economic system, public pressure for change is generated (see Lombard, Stadler & Haasbroek 1993:353).

Pressure through political channels on political representatives ought to lead to adjustments to policies. It ought to have an effect on the working of the economy and its outcome. But this effect is not quite predictable; governmental action has always had unforeseen consequences. Only if economic conditions improve, will the pressure of public discontent be relieved. If there is no improvement, further policy adjustments will be demanded.

Democratisation in South Africa will open the political channels for popular participation. In terms of the theory of democracy it will immediately increase the urgency with which the problem of severe socioeconomic inequalities needs to be addressed. An effective redistribution of income, wealth and economic opportunities will be demanded.

This trend is already evident in the public statements of politicians from the extra-parliamentary groups. From their economic restructuring agendas an impression can be gained of their priorities and the probable economic policy directions they will take if they come into power. They have for a long time seized on the gap between rich and poor as a means of mustering popular support. Now the time has come for them to provide tangible benefits to their supporters. As Heribert Adam has pointed out: 'Democracy without material gains would surely delegitimize a liberation movement that not only fought for symbolic equality but also raised expectations for greater wealth and material equality' (1993:11).

Economic redistribution could take place in different ways. A fiscal policy of progressive direct taxation, differentiated indirect taxation, capital gains tax and estate duties could provide the financial resources for a programme of transfer payments and subsidised social welfare services. A more radical method would be to 'democratise' ownership of economic assets by means of nationalisation, and land reform schemes. The redistribution of economic opportunities by means of affirmative action is already under way, although not yet legislated.

The fiscal balance between tax costs and public benefits has to be designed to give the most positive effect on society's total prosperity. Given that the income and wealth effects of policy adjustments are largely indeterminable, however, it is unlikely that the government will ever produce an optimum redistribution policy. Because the government concentrates more on what is politically desirable than on what is economically feasible, this may not deter it. The government does not even need to bother in the short term about the availability of resources (the size of the tax base), because it can exceed this constraint by deficit financing, with its inevitable inflationary effect.

A redistribution policy will inevitably have an effect on economic growth. This may not necessarily be positive, as it has been claimed to be. Others have argued that economic growth has a trickle-down effect which will benefit the poor. Experience elsewhere has shown that this too is not the case, except in the very long term. Yet economic growth is a prerequisite for successful redistribution. A policy designed to stimulate economic growth and bring about the redistribution of the benefits of growth will therefore be the proper policy for South Africa. Nevertheless, there is no guarantee that a democratic society will be sufficiently well-informed, or its leaders sufficiently courageous and long-sighted to make this choice.

Demographic changes could make a redistribution policy fail. In any society the poor outnumber the rich. In South Africa, where a small minority is prosperous, it will soon become impossible to mobilise sufficient resources through taxation to finance welfare services for the ever-increasing numbers of the poor. Unless the economy can sustain a much higher growth rate than that of the past two decades, democratically approved redistribution policies are not going to succeed.

CONCLUSION

Democracy is not a panacea which will bring stability, liberty and wealth to South Africa. These qualities of life are the basic preconditions for the success of a process of democratisation. In their absence a democracy could degenerate into despotism or even anarchy.

When democratisation opens political channels through which citizens who previously had no say in political decisions can apply pressure on government, it may lead to radical changes in policy. The strongest popular demand in South Africa will probably be for an effective policy of economic redistribution.

Public decision making in democratic systems is subject to economic and political constraints; what is politically desirable may not be economically feasible. Without effective mechanisms to determine public demand, optimal policy positions could not be determined. It is also true of most policies aimed at the redistribution of income, wealth and economic opportunities. The outcome is uncertain.

The thesis of this chapter has been that this uncertainty can be ascribed to the deficiencies of decision making and control in a democracy. A future democratic society in South Africa may come to realise that the success of an economic redistribution programme will depend as much on the competency and accountability of government as on economic growth.

If democracy can bring about improvement in terms of the equity norm, it will contribute to social harmony in South Africa. Increased equality should, however, not be at the expense of economic freedom and efficiency. This is the main challenge confronting democracy in South Africa.

NOTES

1. The concept 'democracy' has its origin in the Greek *demos*, meaning 'the people', and *kratos*, meaning 'rule' or 'power' (Du Toit 1993:3).
2. See the Editorial and Khehla Shubane's contribution to the special focus on 'Preparing for democracy' in *Die Suid-Afrikaan* (nr. 43, 1993:2, 36).
3. André du Toit identified four different democratic principles. He foresees the possibility that if legitimate dissent and opposition are absent, each of the other principles: majority, consensus and mandate could have 'essentially undemocratic outcomes.' (1993:6).

REFERENCES

ADAM, H. 1993. Democracy or elite-cartel? *Die Suid-Afrikaan*, 43:8-11.

BERGSTROM, T.C. & GOODMAN, R.D. 1973. Private demands for public goods. *American Economic Review*, 63:280-296.

BISH, R. L. & OSTROM, V. 1973. *Understanding urban government: metropolitan reform reconsidered*. Washington: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research.

DOWNS, A. 1957. *An economic theory of democracy*. New York: Harper and Row.

DU TOIT, A. 1993. The meaning of democracy. *Special Focus: Die Suid-Afrikaan*, 43:3-6.

LOMBARD, J. A., STADLER, J. J. & HAASBROEK, P. J. 1993. *Die ekonomiese stelsel van Suid-Afrika*. Pretoria: Haum.

LOUW, A. du P. 1983. Democracy. In: VAN VUUREN, D. J. & KRIEK, D. J. *Political alternatives for Southern Africa*. Durban: Butterworth pp. 97-103.

MARTIN, D.T. & MCKENZIE, R.B. 1975. Bureaucratic profits, migration costs and the consolidation of local governments. *Public Choice*, 23:95-100.

McKENZIE, R.B. & Tullock, G. 1978. *Modern political economy*. New York: McGrow-Hill.

SHUBANE, K. 1993. Civics as a building ground for a democratic civil society. *Special Focus: Die Suid-Afrikaan*, 43:35-37.

RESPONSE TO HAASBROEK

Sipho Shabalala

ON THE CONCEPT OF DEMOCRACY

The determination and identification of the socioeconomic preconditions for a democratic South African society should be premised by or governed by an appropriate conceptualisation and articulation of democracy. Democracy is an inalienable human right that goes beyond equality before the law and the right to vote. Democracy includes the empowerment of citizens and their equality with respect to economic and material conditions or means of life and livelihood. As of now the South African state and society do not provide both these aspects of democracy to all citizens. The social, political and economic transformation process should, therefore, be democratising as well as democratic. With these issues in mind it can be maintained that 'the degree, extent and quality of socioeconomic development in any country is the critical measure of the quality of human life, degree of human development and the essence and meaningfulness of democracy'.

Dr Haasbroek (see Chapter 22) refers to voluntary forms of cooperation such as trade, specialisation, savings/capital formation and selective political authority. Dr Haasbroek should be reminded that these forms of cooperation represent social and

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

proprietary relations determined, in the first instance, by control even economic production and labour (as human capital). These forms of cooperation can be democratic only when the parties involved are equally empowered. The empowerment and capacity of parties to enter into any form of voluntary cooperation are preconditions for the equity and effectiveness of voluntary forms of cooperation such as trade, specialisation, savings/capital formation and collective political authority.

In a democratic society the provision of collective public (social) services should take place at the following levels: state level, regional/local government level, and community level (community-based socioeconomic development structures). The provision should not be just at state level as implied by Dr Haasbroek. For effective provision at the different levels, there should be democratic decision-making structures and processes, accountability and transparency. The provision of public services should also go hand in hand with economic activities.

WEALTH CREATION

Dr Haasbroek conceptualises market forces as impersonal forces operating outside the control of natural persons and artificial persons (as represented by institutions).

This is a fallacy. The market is made up of persons, groups of persons and institutions led by persons. What is produced and what is distributed and consumed is determined, in the first instance, by the power distribution between and among these persons. The redistribution of the capacity to gain access to the bases of power is a critical requirement for democratising the market. In other words the market outcomes will be optimal for the socioeconomic needs of the society if, and only if, the participants and constituting market forces have been equally empowered and democratised.

Furthermore, the development of particular economic policies is a function of the degree of socio-politico-economic empowerment of the citizens; the degree to which ownership of economic resources and institutions is spread throughout the society; the ideological or value system guiding the decision-making processes of the leaders of economic institutions; and, lastly, the role of the state.

REDISTRIBUTION MEASURES

The different forms of redistribution and their effects as described and evaluated by Dr Haasbroek represent a narrow view of what redistribution means, or should mean, in the South African situation. The redistribution of economic resources and economic development are not mutually exclusive. Included in the redistribution of wealth and resources are the means for immediate social consumption (food, housing, education, quality sanitation, safe and clean water, health, literacy, etc.) and the means for economic wealth and resources creation, including access to the acquisition of skills, land, capital, etc. Political power and administrative power must also be subject to redistribution. Properly articulated and designed redistribution measures are required to promote the equitable ownership of economic resources, political and social stability, and economic development and efficiency.

C H A P T E R 23

The socioeconomic conditions for the democratisation of South Africa

*Tito Mboweni**

Socioeconomic development is a critical component of any restructuring process in post-apartheid South Africa. Actually, one can even go to the extent of asserting that without socioeconomic development, there can be no democratic sustainability. In a real sense, South Africa's future democratic dispensation will fail or succeed on the basis of how it tackles these socioeconomic issues.

By socioeconomic issues one is referring to those areas of restructuring that are so closely related to economic performance and yet critical for the country's social setup. These are for example: housing, road and street construction, electrification, street lighting, clean drinking water, water-borne sewerage, health provision, education provision, human resources development in its broader context, and welfare and nutritional programmes. The list is not exhaustive but provides some framework for what one refers to as socioeconomic issues.

The availability or non-availability of these socioeconomic services, or basic needs, has been so closely related to the apartheid policies pursued by the minority who have controlled political power in South Africa. A cursory look at the overall socioeconomic setup in the country reveals the unique and gross differences between socioeconomic access by blacks and whites, giving substantive support to the thesis of 'colonialism of a special type' or CST. To crudify the issues, one can say without fear of contradiction, that the black population has been excluded from access to these basic needs whilst the white population has had access to them. The reason is not hard to find: whites had political power and blacks did not.

---

* This chapter was written in April 1993.
Opinions expressed in this chapter are not necessarily those of the ANC.

In order to locate socioeconomic development in a wider context, let us consider the following analytical categories:

Income distribution: Income distribution in South Africa is highly skewed according to racial categories. Some of the work done by Mike McGrath, Francis Wilson and others has documented this issue very well. There is little doubt about the gross inequalities in income. Further, data analysis for 1975 showed that by the Gini-Coefficient for the South African economy was 0,68. This was very high by international standards. To illustrate this, the available data for western countries was between 0,35 and 0,40. In 1980, income per capita was roughly as follows: for whites R8 501, and for blacks R657.

One should not underestimate the impact of income distribution on both the socioeconomic position of people in society and the overall impact of this on the poverty profile of the country. The incomes received by the bottom 40 per cent of the population are actually insufficient to maintain a minimum standard of living. It is also important to remember that incomes are a critical ingredient of the demand pattern of any economy.

Unemployment: Whereas estimates of the rate of unemployment in the South African economy differ, it is however generally accepted that the figure is in the region of at least 43 per cent of the economically active population. Whereas many have taken to the informal sector as a survival strategy, the impact of this high level of unemployment on poverty and the worsening of people's socioeconomic status should not be underestimated either.

Housing and other infrastructural issues: We do not really know for certain how many people are homeless. But judging by some work being done by a number of people from the DBSA to the Urban Foundation, it can be estimated that over seven million people live in squatter camps where basic infrastructures do not exist. Further, given the rate of population growth, it should be expected that these numbers will increase drastically by the year 2000 unless something radical is done about this. Closely related to this is that those who live in housing units, do so under highly dense conditions. It is not unusual to find on average between 10 and 15 people living under one roof or small yard. These days it has become the norm for the small four roomed housing units in places like Soweto to be extended by additional individual rooms at the back of the yards to accommodate many more people. Very few people will deny that electricity is important for both energy and health reasons. ESKOM's own estimates suggest that over 70 per cent of Africans in South Africa do not have electricity. In densely populated areas like mainly coal-powered Soweto, the lack of electricity can be regarded as an environmental disaster. In rural communities the main source of energy is the burning of wood obtained from cutting down local trees. Electrification therefore is a fundamental requirement for any socioeconomic development programme in a democratic South Africa.

Poverty: Poverty is a very serious problem in the South African context. Given the fact that South African inequalities are based on race, it can be crudely stated that the major burden of poverty is borne by the black population. As Wilson and Ramphele have argued, South Africa is not the only country in the world where poverty exists but in South Africa, poverty is related to race. Worse still, South African poverty has grown as a result of deliberate apartheid policies. The nutritional status of children and the infant mortality rates are some of the key indicators of poverty in South Africa. In 1985 for example, 53 per cent of African children between one and five years of age were stunted, whilst 71 per cent were underweight and 10 per cent wasting (in other words, less than 80 per cent average weight for the height of the child). White children, on the other hand, showed 4,0 per cent stunting, 16 per cent underweight and 8 per cent wasting. Between 1981 and 1985, the infant mortaly for African and white children was as follows: 94-124 and 12 respectively. As Wilson and Ramphele have argued, factors which affect the health of children are 'nutrition, sanitation, communicable diseases and the number of accidents occurring in an around the household'.

Education: Perhaps an area requiring less explanation is education. Many in South Africa agree that education in South Africa is in a state of crisis. And judging by the annual budgetary allocations to education, the problem does not seem to lie with the lack of resources but with the efficiency of their expenditure. Such efficiency includes the appropriate education system and the delivery of the service to students. Since education eventually influences all aspects of life its importance in any restructuring programme cannot be overemphasized.

As the context of this debate is the importance of socioeconomic development to the democratisation process, it is important to relate the above issues to CST once again. Apartheid for a long time also depended on influx control and to a large extent this policy dictated the urbanisation strategy, or lack thereof, during the apartheid period. Perhaps this should be looked at within its political economic context. For as long as black people did not vote, there did not seem to be any necessity for the apartheid state to respond positively to their socioeconomic needs. I suppose this is why so many white people, and businesses in particular, are somewhat worried about the 'expectations' of black people for socioeconomic development after the democratisation of the political process. It is quite understandable in my view, that black people have the right to demand the delivery of socioeconomic goods from a government elected by them.

Having made the above comments, it should be possible now to outline in broad terms some of the elements of a socioeconomic development programme which Dr Haasbroek does not seem to have thought about in his chapter (see Chapter 22).

Job creation: It is important in the final analysis that the levels of unemployment be brought down. Of course this can happen within the context of a healthy macroeconomic environment. However, public works programmes are a critical element of job creation in our situation. Further, the establishment of skills centres that will develop skills and provide a basis for people to start their own businesses as individuals or groups, should be seriously considered.

Housing and infrastructural development: This element in the programme will also result in multiple spin-offs for other sectors of the economy. The programme should not just focus on the traditional 'low income houses' but on affordable houses and proceed on this basis with the acceptability of the different types of housing construction available. Infrastructural development should also include electrification and the extension of water and telephone services.

Education and human resources development: By far the most obvious is the socioeconomic development programme. The emphasis, though, should not necessarily be on increasing the total education expenditure (because this is already very high) but rather on improving the efficiency of expenditure and integrating the education system into a single and well organised system. Furthermore, emphasis should be placed on skills-based education and on a system biased towards technical rather than academic education.

Reorganisation of health provision: Focus here has to be on primary preventative health care and the integration of the public hospitals irrespective of colour. While private medical care is going to be a continuing feature of the health system in South Africa for a long time to come, emphasis should however be on the development of a viable public health system. Included in this programme should be a national public nutritional campaign, particularly focused on the squatter camps and rural areas.

Closing the welfare gap; introducing a national social security system: As is well known, old age welfare payments support a large section of the black South African population. Given this fact, consideration should be given to increasing the current amounts to some significant levels depending on availability of resources. The other welfare benefits should be deracialised as well and provided on the basis of the principle of a 'rising welfare floor'.

Youth development programmes: Whilst this does not strictly fall within socioeconomic development, it is critical however, for the stability of the democratic system that the issue of marginalised youth be somehow included in a socioeconomic development programme. Some of the major issues to be considered could be the following: training for youth self-employment, other training for formal sector jobs, part-time and casual work, establishing a National Youth Opportunity Trust to facilitate the implementation of youth training and development, public works programmes within the context of a Peace and Development Corps and finally the training of youth on the job.

A question which normally arises here concerns the sources of finance for any socioeconomic development programme. This is a fair question and the problem needs to be seriously thought through and properly planned for. For purposes of this commentary, I would like to suggest that the main sources of finance be both the public (state) and private sources, the public source being mainly the fiscus. Already the South African budget is quite substantial. The main problem with this budget is that it has not properly prioritised the key areas of socioeconomic development. Once this weakness has been addressed, substantial funds could be set aside for socioeconomic development. In addition, the mere process of redirecting expenditure and simultaneously introducing rigorous and strict methods of ensuring efficient expenditure controls could contribute significantly to the process of socioeconomic development. Private sources would include, among other things, voluntary contributions by private companies through their normal corporate social responsibility programmes (CSRP). All that may be necessary will be to give some clear guidelines on such CSRP in the areas referred to above. However, a critical aspect of private finance sources will be the introduction of prescribed assert requirements (PAR). Such a PAR programme should be targeted or clearly directed towards socioeconomic development. The other possible sources of financing socioeconomic development will obviously be bilateral and multilateral aid programmes. Here we should seek to exploit to the full our victims of apartheid status!

People always fear that socioeconomic programmes will result in 'irresponsible government' or simply 'macroeconomic populism'. I think these concerns are somewhat over-emphasized. However, for the sake of clarity and macroeconomic credibility, the future democratic government will have to operate within strict guidelines of macroeconomic balance in order that socioeconomic development programmes are not prematurely abandoned.

Some people have suggested that the task of socioeconomic reconstruction is so massive that this can only be carried out by an Independent Commission for Socioeconomic Development. While one has some sympathy for this approach, it has a number of possible dangers. Firstly, it is heavily influenced by the current crisis of legitimacy of the current regime where programmes initiated and run by the state or its institutions tend to suffer legitimacy crises as well. As such, the proposed model of commission/forum actually has to be rigorously re-examined once the political legitimacy issue has been resolved. Second, many people will actually be looking to that future democratic government to deliver the goods. Any suggestion that goods are not being delivered, due to a mandate by some commission or other, may end up jeopardising the very democracy we are trying to build. In my view the democratic state should, fundamentally involve itself in socioeconomic development. Of course, this should be done together with non-governmental organisations where possible.

Finally, my submission is that creating the necessary and suitable conditions for socioeconomic development is in the self-interest of the survival of the democratic order itself. Without a stable socioeconomic environment, the democracy will indeed be very fragile. But more importantly, from a macroeconomic point of view, a well planned socioeconomic programme will have positive multiple effects on the economy. As such, a socioeconomic programme should be seen within the context of investment and not just the costs.

CHAPTER 24

Enabling economics: a policy perspective

Henk Langenhoven

THE CHALLENGE: PREVENT PAST MISTAKES IN FUTURE

South Africans have been deprived of the prospect of improving their living standards because of the legacy of apartheid and the rigidities in economic policy-making resulting from this. The real challenge is to avoid the mistakes made in the past and to develop policies beneficial to all South Africans.

The 'old order' thrived on the 'monopoly of the bureaucracy' over the execution of policy because it suited the political powers-that-were and helped them to defuse the rent-seeking result being voted into power. This effect (failure of the state as against market failure) will not be easily avoided by any future government. This is in itself a self-destruction process as the rent-seekers claim more and more of the scarce national resources to the extent that the economy delivering these resources eventually grinds to a halt.

Secondly, domestic political policies of the past provoked international isolation which in turn elicited the 'fortress South African' style of economic policies. The result was the misallocation of the country's labour (impoverished) and capital (wasted) resources. The duplication of bureaucratic structures in pursuit of 'separate' development was terribly wasteful and 'regional' development cost the country's taxpayers roughly a rand for every rand invested in these areas. In addition, South Africa was fighting a very costly war in Namibia and Angola. As a result, a massive shift took place in government spending — away from investment towards consumption expenditure. As international sanctions closed in over the energy 'scares' of 1973 and 1978, South Africa embarked on an investment pattern (via parastatals) for 'strategic reasons' which proved so wasteful that some projects had internal rates of return of minus 20 per cent over their lifecycle.

The unintentional results were a rigid internal economy and an even greater balance of payments constraint on growth than ever before. The great lesson to be learned is that a balance must be maintained between investment (giving a return) and consumption expenditure by government. Growth will also grind to a halt without that; even educational spending can have negative returns (being 'consumption' expenditure).

Some domestic economic policy changes flying in the face of the 'fortress South African policies' were to be seen in the freeing of the labour front, and, more importantly, in the implementation of more flexible monetary policies. The strong performance of the primary exporting sectors (riding on the back of higher oil prices) and the inflow of foreign capital, helped along by public corporation investment, enabled the freeing of the foreign exchange regime. Strong economic growth made apartheid 'affordable' and had the gross national product per capita of the population growing too. No political system (or government) will be sustainable without the means of a growing economy, because only growth will allow sustainable delivery to the population. Another 'engine of growth' will have to be found.

The 'international (dis)connection' proved to be the Achilles heel of the South African experiment in social engineering. Two crises sparked the end of the old order. Since 1981 the dollar value of gold earnings had dropped continuously, and along with that all primary export prices, effectively killing the 'engine' of the South African economy. Until now (1993), export industry, or any other growth sector, has been able to replace it. With that, a major source of tax income to finance government expenditure also fell away, causing investment and economic growth to stall drastically. Then, in 1985, the Rubicon defiance speech effectively severed South African international monetary relations. This brought the balance of payments constraint on growth to an unassailable and unavoidable reality. All the structural economic weaknesses and policy inconsistencies were exposed.

The important lesson is that it all started with the wrong political direction causing an inherently unstable polity. The importance of designing a political system that will stimulate convergent instead of divergent forces in society cannot be overemphasised.

PAST SOLUTIONS TO THE DEVELOPMENT PROBLEM

The structure of the economy makes it so sensitive to international trends that any attempt to 'go it alone' with economic policies (like nationalisation for example), will have the same severe consequences for growth and development as apartheid had. Aid may be forthcoming (with all the 'strings attached' as in other developing economies) but private investment (which is needed to get sustainable growth) will not restart after the isolation years. South Africa will be forgotten.

Like 'development aid' all over the world, the South African domestic attempt was also a great industry for the 'donors', both politically and economically. The same lack of impact resulted, however. The greatest tragedies of the South African experience are the deprivation in terms of education ('saving'!) and the unsuccessful regional development programme (wastage) which only retarded urbanisation. The generation(s) lost in terms of literacy and the 'generation(s) gained' in terms of higher population growth will continue to be the greatest burdens on the economy for very well into the next century.

Over the years several declarations have been made about the sincerity of the government of the day to address the poverty and income distribution problem in the South African society (that is, for 'other than white' people). Regional development, it was thought, would take care of the problem automatically. However, in 1979, the ninth Economic Development Programme specifically mentioned the importance of the effect of regional and/or income distribution policies on national economic development. Income distribution issues never featured in government economic policies, however. As a result Minister Keys (in 1993) still urged in his speech to the first plenary session of the National Economic Forum, that 'programmes to improve distribution' must be included in a development plan for the economy, because the classical 'trickle-down' effect is not sufficient in itself.

Perhaps as a result of the immense difficulty in grasping all facets of the problem and its solutions, little has been accomplished during the last decade. Different analytical tools were developed (for example Social Accounting Matrices for South Africa, Physical Quality of Life Indices, etc.) to simulate possible solutions to the problem. And yet, when the 'normative economic model' was released, the emphasis was almost entirely on improving the 'employment creation capacity of growth', necessitating Keys' remarks.

A large part of the problem originated from inappropriate delivery institutions and systems, duplication for political reasons excluded. On a macro-institutional level, it will be impossible not to have some form or other of 'national economic forum'. Experience all over the world has shown that no winning nation, especially in the developing world, succeeded without having the 'golden triangle' (labour, entrepreneurs and government) working together to achieve that success (with government being the smallest part of the triangle). On a psychological level alone, the management of the 'expectations gap' will be greatly enhanced by such a forum.

A RADICALLY DIFFERENT DEVELOPMENT FOCUS NEEDED

The focus of the development effort will have to change radically. The World Bank declares that 'the future of South Africa will be determined in the cities, and the future of the cities will be determined by housing'. It is thus of great importance to focus attention on the urbanisation challenge and to try to avoid the unfortunate failure of the previous (regional) development exercise. Stability and, indeed survival, hinge on the success of this effort. The founding of a delivery institution with a success formula (or restructuring of an existing one) to carry out a systematically developed policy of urbanisation is of critical importance.

The basic variables underlying the success or otherwise of the above effort are discussed below.

Mention has been made of the necessity for (political) stability. No new foreign private investment will be forthcoming without this, and the willingness of domestic institutions to invest has been drastically curbed by mass boycotts and violence. Institutions such as ESKOM chasing a target of 300 000 electrified homes per annum are running at 30 200 to date for 1993. The burden of constitution-writing at Kempton Park and in the constitution-making body of the future has been mentioned. Unless most parties believe that they will gain more than they will lose from the new constitution, the Nigerian civil war scenario is possible. South Africa suffered a severe breakdown in its economic growth pattern after 1980.

Without finding a way to restart the engine of growth in this economy, not much hope exists for any meaningful future for our children. An economy can grow only when investment takes place, and investment is possible only with the necessary savings effort, domestically and from the inflow of capital from outside. Although the outflow of capital was South Africa's biggest problem after 1985 (between R4 billion and R6 billion per annum), government dissavings have become a problem of two to three times the magnitude of capital flight. Unless we get to grips with this drainage on the economy's growth potential, dreams of satisfying needs will stay unfulfilled.

A great challenge exists not to waste the assets invested in the past. Resources (investment) have to be committed in new directions to ensure the necessary growth and development for prosperity which is vital for stability and the sustainability of the envisaged new political dispensation. The identified fields seem to be export enhancement and socioeconomic development. The investment opportunities in potentially new leading sectors (as far as exports are concerned) will be determined by the market. Planning for the supportive/derived infrastructure which demographic shifts are causing is lacking, however.

DEALING WITH THE BACKLOGS

It is not altogether clear what the backlogs are in terms of housing, urbanisation, education and medical services (to mention a few). The 'needs' approach as opposed to the 'financially viable' approach differs vastly. The benchmark cost of a so-called 'wet' site (micro-services such as water and sewerage have been installed) is R8 000, whereas the macro-services which give access to main roads and bring water and sewerage networks to the edge of an area can be 1,5 times higher than the micro-services. The lack of long-term planning as far as investment by government is concerned (being a soft target for expenditure cuts) is the cause of most bottlenecks at the moment. The problem is that *long-term* has become almost the *short-term* requirement for survival. The fear exists that the maintenance of the national capital asset base (transport networks), which is a problem at present, may be shifted further back in priority, effectively creating a problem of similar magnitude for the near future.

The view is that backlogs will not be caught up because planning for urbanisation is totally uncoordinated — one of many reasons for the failure of the regional development effort. The missing link is a 'systems approach' similar to that of the De Loor report on development aid. This type of approach could put the supply of housing and supportive infrastructure in a manageable framework.

The rationalisation and coordination of the institutional framework facilitating the flow of funds (Independent Development Trust, Urban Foundation, Development Bank of Southern Africa, Small Business Development Corporation, the Housing Trust and Housing Forum, and the Industrial Development Corporation) need urgent attention. This is the major stumbling block in getting money allocated into 'bricks and mortar'.

HOW TO FINANCE THE DEVELOPMENT DRIVE

The financing of the development effort has not been addressed at all. The problem of government dissaving has been touched upon, where '55 per cent of savings [were] used in misapplications' in the 1992/93 financial year, according to the Normative Economic Model. A choice of privatisation as opposed to nationalisation could reap handsome benefits in terms of efficiency and the cash needed to finance socioeconomic investments.

South Africa has a problem in the form of the 'flight' from personal discretionary to contractual savings, primarily because of tax and inflationary reasons. Any plan to free the amount of personal savings for investment will either have to address the tax and inflation problem or mobilise the institutional funds locked up behind 'safety of investment' barriers. The old 'prescribed asset' method has been talked about recently, but will not be very popular. 'Wealth taxes' and 'development levies' as alternative sources of revenue have been part of the 'kite flying' thinking of the ANC lately. The main problem is that this method not only increases the burden of high taxes, but also escalates the 'brain drain'.

The possibility of large amounts of aid coming in from First World countries has been mentioned. Experience with this phenomenon proves that it always has 'strings attached' and eventually dries up. Private investment capital will be the answer, but all the other critical factors will come into play before investors will return *en masse.*

CONCLUSION

Clearly these issues need addressing, yet in such a way that new mistakes are kept to a minimum, and that the adverse economic consequences of past mistakes do not continue to be realised because of inappropriate policy decisions taken now. The international and domestic constraints on the economy have not changed at all (although some will be less coercive than past experience). Given the need for development, economic growth and the need to address past imbalances, this is indeed a challenge. On the other hand, it was never said that social and economic restructuring would be an easy task.

CHAPTER 25

Economic reconciliation as a precondition for sustained democracy*

Servaas van der Berg

Like today's industrial societies, South Africa needs to find social reform policies which will reduce group or class conflict to more manageable proportions, as the industrialisation process has in itself increased the destructive potential of conflict and the mobilisation of both sides to the conflict. The endemic conflict in southern Africa and particularly in South Africa over the past two decades has been the major reason for the inadequate economic performance of South Africa and the region. South Africa is presently in the midst of political change aimed at overcoming this conflict.

Economic factors influence not only the transition to democracy but also the stability of democracy itself. 'To be stable, democracy must be deemed legitimate by the people ... Democracy will not be valued by the people unless it deals effectively with social and economic problems and achieves a modicum of order and justice' (Diamond 1990:2). In South Africa's transition to democracy, economic matters will thus have to feature prominently, for the expectations and aspirations of those who are disenfranchised at present are great. Diamond (1990:10), in discussing the stability of transitions to democracy, asserts that 'severe inequality tends eventually to generate intense, violent political polarization ... To avoid this, to achieve a moderate degree of inequality, socio-economic reforms must be undertaken' if there is to be any real hope that democracy will survive.

---

* This chapter is mainly based on two unpublished papers, presented respectively to the conference on Reconciliation in Southern Africa, Harare, 28-31 October 1991 and the biannual conference of the Economic Society of South Africa, Stellenbosch, October 1991. It also draws from a paper presented to the conference on Community Reconciliation in South Africa, Human Sciences Research Council, Pretoria, 25-26 October 1989 (published as Van der Berg 1990).

The political transition to democracy is thus not the only challenge South Africa presently faces; indeed, the success of the political transition is dependent on successful socioeconomic reform.

> If a new order fails to dramatically improve the circumstances of the majority, disaffection may grow and it may face a level of conflict which cannot be resolved democratically. A new government will, therefore, have to act to reduce poverty. But it will fail unless it also ensures conditions for rapid economic growth; this will be impossible without private investment (Friedman 1991:2).

The central argument of this chapter is that a compromise is necessary between the need for growth and the need for redistribution. Appropriate and successful redistributive policies would enhance growth prospects by providing the stability required for investment, just as growth would, in turn, improve the prospects for redistribution. If redistribution through the market process is inadequate, the emphasis on budgetary redistribution is likely to be strengthened.

This chapter starts by considering the costs of conflict, which point to the benefits to be gained from reconciliation. I shall then discuss the economic sources of conflict and the preconditions for legitimation before briefly considering whether the available scope for economic change is adequate to provide the social and political stability required for a stable democracy. In this argument I also make clear why I believe restructuring of social spending to be the most promising route for economic reconciliation.

COSTS OF CONFLICT AND POTENTIAL BENEFITS FROM RECONCILIATION

The economic costs of conflict are mainly related to two factors: resources devoted to military and security spending rather than the improvement of the quality of life, and inadequate economic growth due to domestic and foreign investor uncertainty induced by social instability.

Much of the military destruction in the subcontinent has its roots in the 'total strategy' thinking of the early 1970s, which started from the premise that the country faced a 'total onslaught' that needed to be combated by means of a 'total strategy'. The resource cost of military conflict is illustrated by the following figures: South African military spending rose from just over 2 per cent of GDP in 1972 to well over 4 per cent for most of the subsequent eighteen years. If this ratio had remained at its 1972 level — which would have required significantly different domestic and regional policies — fiscal savings over the eighteen years would have amounted to about R75 billion in 1990-rand terms (assuming that GDP growth remained the same). This is well in excess of the total amount required to eliminate the present housing backlog of about 1,2 million houses and the schools backlog of about two million school places. This does not even take account of the manpower wasted on the conflict, the destruction of economic resources, the loss of lives, or economic growth opportunities forgone. Regional and domestic peace are therefore not only moral imperatives, but also make good economic sense.

Moreover, conflict had undermined domestic social, political and economic stability and, most importantly, the domestic and foreign investor confidence required for sustained economic growth. The economic crisis South Africa experienced has been evident in declining per capita incomes since the mid-1970s (barring a brief interlude around 1980 when the high gold price caused a short-lived boom), in rising unemployment and in accompanying social problems such as crime, violence and instability, which in turn frightened away investors and strengthened the vicious circle of low growth and instability. The lack of investor confidence and the balance of payments constraint (partly the result of sanctions and disinvestment) contributed in no uncertain measure to this poor growth performance. Both these constraints are strongly linked to the social conflict stemming from the legitimacy crisis of our political and social system.

Sustained economic growth exceeding the population growth rate of about 2½ per cent per year is required to raise the living standards of the whole population — privileged and poor — in the long run. There are promising signs that the next decade may bring a somewhat improved economic performance (a view supported by the World Bank and IMF studies), but it is not likely that this would be anything near adequate to address our social needs and create the required number of jobs. Moreover, an improved growth performance crucially depends on certain fundamental changes in South Africa. A necessary but not sufficient condition to induce growth would be a political settlement, whereas the creation of a sociopolitical system enjoying legitimacy is required to sustain growth. In addition, the economic policies followed by a new government need to be perceived both by domestic and foreign investors as moderate and market conforming.

SOURCES OF ECONOMIC CONFLICT AND PRECONDITIONS FOR LEGITIMATION

If legitimacy is 'the capacity of the system to engender and maintain the belief that the existing ... institutions are the most appropriate ones for the society' (Lipset

1984:88), economic disparities along group lines need to be substantially reduced for a new socioeconomic dispensation to be perceived as legitimate by blacks. As in other societies that industrialised earlier, industrialisation fundamentally altered views on the appropriateness of institutions and policies, while it also enhanced the disruptive capacity of urban workers. In South Africa this necessarily undermined the legitimacy of political and economic institutions capable of generating such stark racial inequalities:

- The gap between white and black per capita income is about ten to one, a ratio which has fluctuated very little throughout this century.
- Even today, the state spends almost four times as much on the education, health, social pensions, and housing of each white person as it does on each black person.
- Unequal education strengthens the inequality in the labour market and transmits inequality in the marketplace across generations.
- Inequalities in wealth (accumulated savings) are extremely severe in South Africa, as high income differentials allow the rich to save a great deal, while the poor have too little income to accumulate any of it. Wealth inequalities are especially visible in that they determine quality of housing and consumption patterns of durable consumer goods.

The combined effect of these and other inequalities is reflected by measures relating to health. The life expectancy of blacks is about twelve years lower than that of whites (58 years as against 70 years), mainly as a result of a wide gap in infant and child mortality rates. In fact, the 90 deaths within the first year of life per thousand black babies born in 1982 was on a similar level to white infant mortality at the time of Union in 1910.

Rising black aspirations and their increased ability to mobilise against such inequalities (for instance through trade unions) were bound to lead to opposition to institutions capable of generating such large inequalities.

The transition to democracy and the need for sustained economic growth demands a balancing of the interests of the two main parties to our internal conflict, viz. blacks — who make up the majority of the population — and whites — who provide most of the skills, entrepreneurship and capital that presently drive our economy. A stable and growing economy requires the acceptance of the sociopolitical system as legitimate by mobilised black interest groups, but also the confidence of white investors, the retention of white skills and entrepreneurship and foreign investor confidence. Inequalities cannot be left unchanged, but need to be addressed in a manner which is not inimical to economic growth and which takes account of white fears and interests. This requires urgent attention to poverty and redistribution, but also limits the economic options available to a new government. The social stability that is required as a precondition for sustained growth is no longer possible in South Africa without a sociopolitical system that enjoys the support or at least the consent of the black majority. On the other hand, the acquiescence of whites and the support of foreign investors or lenders are required for sustained growth. South Africa's two major population groups are thus locked into a situation of mutual interdependence, in which economic growth requires that both sides to the conflict perceive their interests to be accommodated.

THE SCOPE FOR RECONCILIATION

The challenge in South Africa lies in overcoming the vast economic inequalities that undermine the cohesiveness of our social system and in incorporating the majority of the population into the modern economy by social and institutional reform and government intervention aimed at reducing economic divisions in society. On the other hand, such reform should not undermine the prospects for economic growth. (There are of course always economic dangers in redistributive policies in semi-industrial countries; Moll (1988, 1991a & 1991b) provides excellent summaries of the evidence.)

In particular, for democracy to be stable it is important that the poor should benefit from the political transition and that racial gaps should be reduced in a manner that shows tangible benefits to a large part of the black population, particularly in the cities where mobilisation is most developed and the demonstration effect from white living standards has had the most impact.

In an incomplete work in which this author has been engaged, some tentative conclusions were drawn on the possibility of addressing inequality. Although not yet properly quantified, these conclusions could assist in assessing possibilities for underpinning the transition to democracy through improving black material living standards without undermining growth.

Redistribution of incomes: prospects for market redistribution

Indications are that in the medium term — five to ten years — the economy will not grow enough to allow major redistribution of income from whites to blacks. Although the income of blacks in employment will increase through wage rises and upward black mobility, this will be counteracted by growing black unemployment, with the consequence that racial per capita income gaps will change only slowly. The rate of racial income redistribution will be determined mainly by the economic growth rate through its effect on black employment, but even the most optimistic growth outcome will not satisfy the material aspirations of large segments of the black population.

That leaves the budget as the next area of contention: if the market does not redistribute rapidly enough, the burden will be placed on the political process. Can redistribution through the budget produce tangible and rapid material results within a limited time frame for the mass of blacks? Both the income and the expenditure side of the budget need to be considered:

- To what extent can taxes be increased or restructured to have a broadly progressive effect?
- How can expenditure be restructured to achieve redistributive ends?

The income side of the budget: the scope for increasing taxes

Many arguments against budgetary redistribution rest on explicit or implicit views on the constraints on the income side of the budget, that is on views on the existence and proximity of tax ceilings or on the negative consequences of taxes for growth. International comparisons do not indicate that South African tax levels are particularly high and a slightly higher tax yield may indeed be possible (see for example Loots 1991). But such higher taxation may not be progressive in its incidence. Personal tax rates are already high enough to encourage tax evasion. Furthermore, South African fiscal authorities have to be careful not to discourage investment and/or to encourage capital flight and a skills drain. Indirect taxation is usually regressive in its incidence, and higher company taxes are likely to be shifted onto consumers or even workers through higher prices or smaller wage increases.

Thus prospects for redistribution on the income side of the budget are rather inauspicious. There is limited scope for increasing tax income over a period, and the burden of such higher taxes would fall mainly on blacks in the form of indirect taxes (for example VAT). This leaves the expenditure side as the more promising avenue for redistribution.

The expenditure side of the budget: restructuring public spending

Contrary to popular opinion, research indicates that the scope for a 'post-apartheid dividend' from eliminating apartheid spending is small. There are only limited savings to be made from the rationalisation of duplicated administrative and service delivery systems, reduced security spending after apartheid, and the elimination of waste on ideological projects such as the homelands and industrial decentralisation. There are other, longer-term benefits to be gained, though, such as increased efficiencies from restructuring and a better targeting of policies at the needs of the whole population. But such benefits may be difficult to harvest.

What are we left with, then? As there is limited remaining scope for increasing social spending as a proportion of GDP by restructuring the budget, social spending will mainly grow along with the economy. Therefore increased social spending on blacks will have to come largely from redirecting social spending at present going to whites.

The current large racial inequalities in social spending indicate that its redistribution may have significant consequences. However, there are limits to how rapidly financial resources can be redistributed, for there may be capacity constraints; for example greater educational spending for blacks may have a limited impact as qualified teachers are in short supply.

Nevertheless, redirecting social spending appears to offer most scope for improving the material situation of blacks in the medium term. In part that will have to occur at the expense of whites, which may be a further argument for not doing it all at once.

Affordable levels of social expenditure are approximately less than two fifths of present white levels, so that parity at expenditure levels commensurate with South Africa's available resources would have high costs for whites. But no new democratic government would be able to postpone addressing this problem.

Legitimation requires visible intervention in social processes by the state to promote social justice. Waiting for the economy to restructure opportunities is not enough and is, as was argued earlier, too slow. Thus we require:

- social programmes targeted at addressing poverty, such as expansion of special public employment programmes to alleviate the effects of widespread unemployment, and
- a redirection of emphasis within existing social programmes. For instance, in education, state spending could place greater emphasis on literacy programmes and universal primary education, and in health, on preventative medicine geared towards poverty-related diseases such as tuberculosis. State expenditure patterns must be adjusted to addressing the most urgent needs first.

CONCLUSION

This chapter argues that a return to sustained economic growth urgently requires a legitimate sociopolitical system that can soon provide tangible benefits to the black population. A changed pattern of social spending after political change may provide the best possibility for such an improvement in the material situation of blacks. This is in line with the new conventional wisdom in the South African economic debate, that redistribution should take place mainly through new patterns of public expenditure. Whether this would be adequate to ensure a sustainable democracy is far from clear. Without adequate growth, though, no amount of redistribution would be enough to sustain democracy.

Reconciliation would require short-term sacrifice by whites, mainly through lower spending on social services such as education, health, social welfare and housing. The obvious equity of eliminating discriminatory spending patterns may make it acceptable to whites, even if they find it unpalatable. There are great challenges attached to eliminating spending discrimination, but it could significantly contribute to addressing poverty and reduce inequality if combined with sustained economic growth and black upward mobility in the labour market. That offers better prospects for economic reconciliation than before, while enhancing the ability of the market-based economy to attract investment and generate growth.

REFERENCES

DIAMOND, Larry. 1990. Three paradoxes of democracy. *Journal of Democracy* 1(5).

FRIEDMAN, Steven. 1991. Another elephant? Prospects for a South African social contract. *Policy Issues and Actors*, 4(1).

LIPSET, Seymour Martin. 1984. Social conflict, legitimacy, and democracy. In: CONNOLY, WILLIAM (ed.). *Legitimacy and the state.* Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

LOOTS, Lieb. 1991. A tax strategy for redistribution. In: MOLL, Peter, NATTRASS, Nicoli & LOOTS, Lieb. (eds), *Redistribution: how can it work in South Africa?* Cape Town: David Philip.

MOLL, Terence. 1988. 'The limits of the possible': macro-economic policy and income redistribution in Latin America and South Africa. In: SUCKLING, John & WHITE, Landeg. (eds). *After apartheid: renewal of the South African economy.* London/New Jersey: James Currey/ Africa World Press.

MOLL, Terence. 1991a. Microeconomic redistributive strategies in developing countries. In: MOLL, Peter; NATTRASS, Nicoli & LOOTS, Lieb. (eds), *Redistribution: how can it work in South Africa?* Cape Town: David Philip.

MOLL, Terence. 1991b. Macroeconomic redistributive packages in developing countries, In: MOLL, Peter; NATTRASS, Nicoli & LOOTS, Lieb. (eds), *Redistribution: how can it work in South Africa?* Cape Town: David Philip.

VAN DER BERG, Servaas. 1990. The economics of intercommunal reconciliation in South Africa. In: RHOODIE, Nic J. (ed.), *Community reconciliation in South Africa.* Pretoria: Human Sciences Research Council.

SECTION

VI THE TRANSITION FROM APARTHEID TO DEMOCRACY

CHAPTER

26 Salient elements in the transition from apartheid to democratic government
Oscar Dhlomo

27 White South Africans' expectations regarding democratic nation-building and community reconciliation
Nic Rhoodie

28 Perspectives on negotiation and mass action in the transition to democratic nation-building
H.W. van der Merwe and Gabi Meyer

29 National liberation and the quest for democratic nation-building
Zola Skweyiya

CHAPTER 26

Salient elements in the transition from apartheid to democratic government

Oscar Dhlomo

UNIQUE FEATURES OF THE PROCESS OF TRANSITION

The transition from apartheid to democracy in South Africa has a few unique features. Firstly, the mode of transition is a peaceful negotiation process rather than a violent revolution. Secondly, the negotiators are the erstwhile political 'haves' and the erstwhile political 'have nots'. The 'haves' are negotiating themselves out of a position in which they enjoyed a monopoly of political power and influence while the 'have nots' are negotiating the mechanics of breaking up this monopoly in such a way that they are enabled to play a leading role in the governance of the country. Thirdly, there is no third party that is playing the role of mediator in the process and the negotiators themselves are facing one another at the negotiating table. Finally, the white minority that is about to relinquish its monopoly over political power is no longer a colonialist minority that will sail away into the sunset once political power slips from its grasp. This minority has become indigenous and will therefore have to live with the consequences of the transition process — whatever they are.

THE EROSION OF APARTHEID AND THE ADVENT OF THE DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENT

Although it has taken many decades for the apartheid edifice to crumble there is no doubt that right from its conception apartheid carried the seeds of its own destruction. The policy could not stand against the laws of morality, demography and sheer pragmatism.

In the socioeconomic sphere the cracks in the apartheid edifice began to show when sustained urbanisation rendered the influx control regulations unworkable. As more blacks flocked into urban areas in search of work and a better life, it became illogical to argue that these people were not going to be provided with adequate housing, education and health services because they were 'foreigners' who would sooner or later return to their 'rural homelands'. Property ownership for blacks in urban areas was therefore a logical development. It also became illogical to argue that blacks could not participate in local government structures in the urban areas where they lived. The establishment of black local authorities, discredited as they were in the eyes of some black political organisations, was another logical development.

The increased tempo of social integration in South Africa soon challenged the logic of discriminating against some citizens on the basis of their skin colour. Thus it became increasingly impossible to implement, let alone justify, laws such as the Population Registration Act, the Immorality Act, the Group Areas Act, the Separate Amenities Act, the Political Interference Act and many others whose intent was the perpetration of race-based discrimination.

It would of course be an oversimplification to argue that only the laws of sheer logic led to the erosion of apartheid and the advent of democracy. It would also be an oversimplification to argue that the so-called 'silent revolution' which saw the advent of black informal business, informal settlements and the like was solely responsible for this transformation. A lot of political pressure was also exerted on the government of the day until a stage was reached where the political, moral and economic cost of maintaining apartheid became far more daunting than the cost of abolishing it.

The Democratic Movement did play a significant role in these developments alongside other socio-economic forces. The black struggle for political and land rights is the oldest struggle in the political history of South Africa.

Mainly as a result of the diplomatic initiatives of organisations such as the ANC and PAC, the international community was drawn into the struggle against apartheid. World organs such as the United Nations, the OAU and the Commonwealth helped to internationalise the problem of apartheid and to pressurise the South African Government to abandon the policy.

The South African Government's final attempt to reform and not abolish apartheid saw the establishment of the Tricameral Parliament in 1983. This parliament which is now in its death throes was roundly rejected by virtually the entire black population and the international community because not only did it exclude the African majority from voting, but it also legitimised racism as the basis for political participation and mobilisation. The United Democratic Front which was established during this period played a leading role alongside other black political organisations inside the country in opposing the tricameral constitution.

The release of political prisoners, the unbanning of political organisations, the return of exiles, the lifting of the State of Emergency and the advent of Mr F.W. de Klerk marked the zenith in the process of dismantling apartheid and unshackling political activity in South Africa.

DEMOCRATIC PLURALISM, INTERCOMMUNITY RECONCILIATION AND DEMOCRATIC STATE BUILDING

This sudden unshackling of political activity in our country, welcome and commendable as it is, has in turn spawned new challenges which now demand our full attention if democracy is to survive. The political playing field at present resembles a battlefield. It is as if numerous political players have been let loose on the playing field and are all trying to play the game without observing the rules. Too many of our political leaders pay lip-service to the philosophy of democratic pluralism. Political differences are settled not by calm reasoning and persuasion but by pangas, spears and AK 47's. Leaders tell us not what is good with their parties but what is bad with their opponents' parties. Some parts of the country have become no-go areas in which opposing political views are banned. White political parties that attempt to sell their policies in the black areas have their meetings disrupted and their spokespersons harassed and molested. White right-wing political parties mete out the same treatment to black political organisations campaigning in conservative white towns. What is even more disturbing is that some of our political leaders seem to condone or encourage this political intolerance. One hopes that by the time an election is held in April 1994, enough education on democratic pluralism would have been made possible — otherwise a free and fair election will turn out to be a pipe dream.

The fact that we are emerging from a grim past in which a lot of hurt was unleashed in the name of apartheid makes it difficult for us to suddenly preach intercommunity reconciliation. Nevertheless this is not an impossible task provided our leaders take the lead and preach reconciliation amongst their followers. It is going to be impossible to undertake the mammoth task of democratic state-building if the foundations of this state are hatred, mutual suspicion and intolerance. Before the task of state-building begins in earnest there is also a need for us to reach consensus on how we will tackle the issue of redressing the legacy of apartheid through various mutually acceptable forms of restitution and affirmative action. Numerous conflicting noises on this issue ranging from retribution and/or confiscatory redress to a wealth tax, all point to the fact that we do need a negotiated national policy on this issue if we are to face the future with confidence and a singleness of purpose.

AN INVENTORY OF MILESTONES REACHED

The scoreboard and timetable of progress

Considering the uniqueness of our transition it is a political miracle that we have done so well thus far. The fact that twenty-six unelected political entities of differing political strengths agreed to negotiate in the first place is no small achievement. So is the fact that of these twenty-six entities only two have thus far decided to withdraw from the negotiation process. It is also important to note that the two parties that withdrew claimed that they were not happy with the procedure for adopting decisions and not with the principle of a negotiated constitutional settlement as such. Besides, the withdrawal of these two parties has neither stalled nor disrupted the negotiation process.

During the first few days of the negotiation process agreement was reached on the statement of intent that would guide the deliberations. Agreement was also reached on twenty-seven underlying constitutional principles that would guide the elected constitution-making body in drawing up a new constitution.

Four draft bills establishing an Independent Electoral Commission, a Broadcasting Authority, a Transitional Executive Council and a Media Commission are now destined for parliament and we now even have a definite date (April 1994) for the first democratic election in South Africa.

The positions of the main parties and players

While the scoreboard and timetable of progress both look impressive there are simmering tensions among some negotiating parties which threaten to undermine the negotiation process.

Perhaps the greatest achievement thus far has been the remarkable consensus that has developed between the ANC and the National Party on the process and product of current negotiations. Both parties have endorsed the election date in April 1994, they have supported the need for the establishment of the TEC to oversee the transition process, they have agreed that an elected constitution-making body will draw up the final constitution, and, what is even more remarkable, they have agreed to share power for five years under a government of national unity after April 1994. It appears that all differences between the two parties on issues such as the powers and duties of the TEC and its subcouncils in relation to the powers and duties of the existing cabinet have not been resolved. There does not appear to be any final agreement on the modalities of power-sharing in the proposed government of national unity after April 1994. On the whole, it would be fair to conclude that the ANC and the NP continue to drive the transition process more as partners in transition then as adversaries engaged in party political rhetoric.

While there is growing consensus between the ANC and NP there is growing dissidence on the part of the Inkatha Freedom Party which left the negotiation table in protest on the day the election date was agreed upon by the negotiators. While the IFP withdrew from negotiations ostensibly because of its opposition to the principle of sufficient consensus, there are indications that there is more to the IFP's dissatisfaction with the process than just the principle of sufficient consensus.

Initially, the IFP opposed virtually everything on which agreement has now been reached by the majority of the negotiators. The IFP opposed the establishment of the TEC, the holding of an election, the establishment of an unelected constitution-making body and the installation of a government of national unity. This process, which the IFP terms a 'two-phased transition process', had to be replaced by one in which the present unselected negotiators would draw up the final constitution with the assistance of multiparty experts. The final constitution would then be ratified by means of a referendum before elections for a democratic government are held.

The IFP's initial protestation that the ANC and NP were colluding in a bid to establish a unitary state are now muted since it has become evident that the new constitution is bound to have significant federal features.

Nevertheless at the time of writing the IFP remains out of the negotiation process and is now threatening to boycott the elections in April 1994. What remains difficult to fathom is what the IFP hopes to achieve by boycotting both the negotiation process and the election. Firstly, negotiations have gone on and important agreements have been reached in the absence of the IFP. In fact, not only has the process continued in the IFP's absence but the majority of the IFP's allies in COSAG have so far not followed it out of the negotiation chamber. Secondly, if the IFP were to boycott the elections, it would deny itself an opportunity to establish a democratic political foothold in Natal/KwaZulu where it has a reasonable chance of winning significant support in an election. The disappearance of the IFP's KwaZulu/Natal political base would in turn signal the end of the IFP as a regional political force. Thirdly, the debate for or against contesting the election is likely to cause serious tensions within the IFP. It is no secret that opinions within the party are deeply divided on this question. Finally, contrary to popular belief, the IFP is unlikely to acquire the military and logistic capacity to wage a sustained civil war in order to disrupt the democratic process. The analogy that the IFP could be the UNITA of South Africa is therefore far-fetched. For many years the USA Government supplied UNITA with modern arms and the movement controlled vast tracts of territory in Angola. For many years UNITA also enjoyed sustained military and logistic support from the South African Defence Force. Virtually the entire Western world saw in Dr Savimbi a defender of democracy and a fighter against communism. It was only after Savimbi refused to accept the results of a democratic election that most Western countries began to realise that he was in fact an enemy of democracy and a power-hungry dictator and regional destabiliser.

On the contrary, the IFP would not be able to rely on the West for the supply of modern arms to wage a civil war; it would not have any territory within South Africa where it would enjoy undisputed control; the governmental infrastructure of KwaZulu with all its organs, including the KwaZulu police, would not be controlled by an IFP administration after the elections of 1994 which the IFP plans to boycott and central government funding to an IFP-controlled KwaZulu Government would similarly cease after this date. Finally, a multiparty government of national unity is likely to be far less sympathetic and patient with a dissident IFP than the present National Party Government. It would therefore be political suicide on the part of the IFP to attempt to disrupt the election by resorting to civil war or the use of force or intimidation.

PROSPECTS FOR STATE-BUILDING AND INTERCOMMUNITY RECONCILIATION

The greatest threat to prospects for state-building and intercommunity reconciliation at the present time is the violence that continues to destroy the fabric of our society. Everything possible needs to be done urgently to reduce this violence. All racist public statements and slogans from the left and right of the political spectrum will need to be unconditionally banned from our political vocabulary. Agreement will have to be reached on the modalities for burying our apartheid past so that we can all embrace a new covenant for the future. This covenant will have to emphasise the need for the creation of a common vision for a new democratic South Africa whose citizens will be seen to be reconciled. Values such as tolerance, peace, respect for diversity, patriotism, compromise and mutual respect will have to be the cornerstones of such a covenant. This is the only acceptable foundation on which nation-building and national reconciliation can find roots and grow in the hearts and minds of all South Africans.

CHAPTER 27

White South Africans' expectations regarding democratic nation-building and community reconciliation

Nic Rhoodie

Taking into account the complexity of South Africa's culturo-historically deeply divided society, the deduction can be made with a great deal of justification that South Africa's search for a stable democratic political order will be no easy task. In fact, many South Africans believe that South Africa has been programmed historically, as it were, for conflict and that the dice are heavily loaded against any attempt to create a viable democratic political order.

The obstacles on the road to a democratic political order are as manifold as they are daunting. Without the democratisation of South Africa's government institutions, intercommunal reconciliation will remain a mere ideal and, in turn, orderly nation-building will be even less attainable. It is crucially important that we should not regard state-building and nation-building (in its culturo-historical and ethnic sense) as synonyms; it is equally important to realise that at issue here is not a zero-sum competitive interaction between a state community and an ethonational community, but two collectivities: a state citizenry (those who fall within the jurisdiction of the territorially demarcated jurisdiction area of the state's institutions), on the one hand, and a specific culturo-historical community on the other. State-building and nation-building are therefore not mutually exclusive (as stable ethnically plural democracies such as Belgium, Switzerland, Spain and India can testify) but rather mutually reconcilable and accommodatable. The aborting of nation-building (in the ethno-culturo-historical sense) is consequently not a prerequisite for state-building.

Now that negotiation and constitutional reform have become an irreversible process, South Africans are increasingly starting to speculate about the prospects for successful nation-building and intercommunal reconciliation. In particular, white

South Africans who have committed themselves more deeply than ever before to a democratic constitutional state, are becoming aware of the nature and magnitude of the obstacles to be overcome before a viable democratic form of government can be established in South Africa. The closer South Africa moves toward the new constitutional order, the more concretely the obstacles on the road ahead loom up before these whites and the greater their awareness of the risks inherent in this transformation.

In the dual pressure cooker of international sanctions and domestic upheaval it was difficult for ordinary whites in the early 'eighties to speculate positively about black rights and the dismantling of apartheid. However, the ending of the bush war in Namibia and Angola at the close of the decade infused whites with more optimism and led to a corresponding scaling down of their fear about survival. Despite sanctions, violence and sceptical white public opinion, an increasing majority of whites became convinced that the apartheid options had finally been removed from the agenda. In future the thrust of the political debate would be about the modalities of a representative democracy.

Where most South Africans had previously discussed the implications of a post-apartheid society mainly in academic, speculative terms, the inexorably approaching vision of interim executive government institutions, a transitional constitution and constitutional assembly — and the one-man-one-vote general election that will precede this vision — is compelling them to look with increasing realism at their options. In fact, the knowledge that the central decision-making institutions in the critical power structures of the new South African political order will, for all practical purposes, be managed by black nationalists, is beginning to surface among whites even at grassroots level.

For the purposes of this exploratory analysis, I have restricted myself to the risk analyses that more and more white South Africans in the mainstream of South Africa's white democrats are increasingly compelled to make in the face of the human realities confronting them daily. How do these whites (who will henceforth be referred to as the white democrats or the white democratic centrists) respond to the imperative adjustments that South Africa's transformation from apartheid to a democratic political order demand? How high, or how low, is their tolerance threshold for the adjustment responses that a black-dominated 'new South Africa' is already beginning to force on them? And what impact will such a transformation have on their vital needs and survival-related interests?

I will now briefly (and not necessarily in order of importance) discuss a few of the questions troubling the minds of the white democrats. In a nutshell: the following five functional imperatives have to be fulfilled in order to establish a democratic sociopolitical order in South Africa:

- A meeting of minds and a common will in respect of the sociopolitical norms and values that should apply in the state;
- the prevention of a rising spiral of excessive expectations which no government will be able to satisfy in other words, the narrowing of the gap between aspirations and their gratification among the ranks of the less privileged;
- the drastic scaling down of white fears regarding their survival-related needs and interests;
- the curtailment of the present cycle of violence and the handling of conflict by means of a culture of order to manageable proportions;
- the creation of sociopolitical institutions around the state's functions of order and welfare, which most citizens would in general regard as legitimate.

These brief introductory thoughts will, in the context of the white democrats' perceptions of South African political dynamics, be the main thrust behind the following paragraphs.

To the extent that the new realities emerge on the foreground, the question is increasingly being asked: In what measure does the South African sociopolitical dynamic satisfy the critical conditions for the realisation and operationalisation of a viable sociopolitical order which will be accepted as both institutionally viable and legitimate by the majority of all of the politically relevant interest groups? Research findings indicate that there is large-scale scepticism, distrust, suspicion — even fear — among whites and these factors intrinsically have a seriously inhibiting effect on the process of communal reconciliation and, by implication, on democratic nation-building. On the other hand this negative spirit is being largely neutralised by increasing proof of a growing majority of whites especially among the white democrats in the political middle ground — who regard the present transformation of apartheid to a deracialised democracy as irreversible.

The central debate is therefore also increasingly no longer whether the democratic sociopolitical model (currently running in the inside track) should be regarded as merely one of several options (among which neo-apartheid is potentially another option), but instead what means will be used to accomplish the democratisation process — including the sociopolitical institutions by means of which the new democratic system will be operationalised. Obviously it is being debated how a democratic order can be implemented without prejudicing the survival-related needs and interests of established culturo-historical and ethnic communities.

A common loyalty toward the new post-apartheid state, including a spirit of tolerance and reconciliation at both personal and communal level, is the primary operational imperative for a viable and stable democratic political order. A collective democratic will is a feature of all stable polities. Such a will encourages a spirit of compromise and co-operation. (For a description of the positive role of the 'common democratic will', compromise and moderation in Switzerland, see Brown-John 1988:29-31.) However, the final condition for the operationalisation of a democratic political order is a meeting of minds about the basic values and standards that will have to underpin the state's sociopolitical institutions.

As regards the positive role of this meeting of minds, more specifically in the democratic federal model, Brown-John (1988:27) argues 'that no institution, no matter how well established it may appear, can operate efficiently without some type of common will'. Such a common will makes it possible to accept culturo-historical and ethnic diversities and to accommodate them institutionally. To judge by the sociopolitical realities of the day it is extremely doubtful whether such a common will does exist. Research surveys conducted by the HSRC confirm the doubt whether there is sufficient meeting of minds among the main politically relevant interest groups to form the normative basis of a democratic political order.

In sociopolitical terms the gap between the mind-sets of the NP government and the ANC alliance remains a major impediment in the hammering out of a negotiated democratic dispensation that will be accepted as legitimate by the majority of politically relevant interest groups in South Africa. Indeed, all things taken into account, the main obstacles on the road to a democratic social order can be traced back to one basic factor: the lack in leadership circles, and among the main players in the reform process, of a meeting of minds regarding the redistribution of life chances in general and of decision-making power in particular (see Rhoodie 1992:19-20). This negative force in the South African polity reflects a collective mind-set engendered by the perception that the other party will not keep its part of the bargain and that the other party has a hidden agenda concealing its true aim. In white ranks, the current fires of suspicion are being stoked by actions and statements that are not exactly conducive to creating a climate of reconciliation and the meeting of minds that is an operational imperative for viable nation-building. ANC threats of sustained high-profile mass action on a scale unprecedented in South African raises the question among many whites whether the ANC and its allies are sincere in their public commitment to peaceful negotiation politics. White suspicions are fed by the prolonged violence — so much so that an increasing number of whites have already begun to accept that a Bosnian or Lebanese-type civil war has become inevitable.

Historically there is impressive evidence that communal survival in the long term is promoted to the extent that the community concerned internalises and institutionalises communal values and symbols. It is largely communal, historically rooted values and symbols that have given ethnonational communities such as the Irish, Catalonians, Basques, Czechs, Turks, Hungarians, Portuguese, Croats, Slovenes, Japanese and Israelis their very high toleration threshold for external assaults and therefore a high communal survival potential.

Common values and symbols create and promote the meeting of minds that is essential for modern state-building — a historical value that will become increasingly prominent as the democratisation of South Africa's sociopolitical order becomes institutionalised. New values and symbols cannot conveniently be conjured out of a hat and used as the foundation for the establishment of a new democratised polity in which they are institutionally accommodated and mentally/normatively internalised. The prerequisites for democratic nation-building in culturo-historically and ethnically segmented state societies such as that in South Africa dictate that new values/symbols cannot be brought into being by a proclamation in the *Government Gazette.* It has taken ethnonational communities such as the Scots, Irish, Basques, Czechs, Hungarians, Greeks and Portuguese more than a thousand years to develop the particular values and symbols that serve as the basis of their communal survival. This type of historical process does not allow many short cuts as South Africa's state-builders are already beginning to find out.

The major challenge posed by state-building in South Africa is that it must be based on those communal values/symbols that will be respected by the majority of the country's citizens as legitimate symbols of the polity as a whole, despite the latter's culturo-historical and ethnic divisions. The democratisation of the South African polity will have to take place in such a way that it will be possible for a specific ethnic and culturo-historical community to reconcile its particular values and symbols with those of other communities. Above all, the values and symbols of the individual culturo-historical community will have to be reconciled with those of the polity's mainstream values and symbols in a way that inhibits conflict — that is, by endeavouring to reduce them to proportions that can be accommodated institutionally. For such a process to succeed, the creators of the new South Africa will need to have a good grasp of what is intrinsic to the ethnocultural community and what historical forces led to and maintained it (see Smith 1986:206).

Many of South Africa's problems in establishing a democratic sociopolitical order can be traced to the fact that there is a lack of those common values that are essential for democracy to survive. The problem is exacerbated by there being insufficient cross-cutting in the population as a whole in respect of educational status, occupation, place of residence and the various social, economic and cultural institutions — even values and standards — normally occurring in all societies. The consequence is a tendency towards polarisation of interests, especially between whites and blacks. A further consequence is that the main politically relevant interest groups continue to incite suspicion, distrust and scepticism. Such negative perceptions and stereotypes are neutralised to the extent that cross-cutting of values and sociopolitical institutions takes place spontaneously.

Regarding the whites' perceptions of the distance in values between whites and blacks, for example, two surveys conducted in November 1991 and January 1992 showed that a majority of the white respondents (54 per cent and 53 per cent respectively) believed that whites and blacks did not share enough values to negotiate a new democratic South Africa, as against 38 per cent in both instances who thought that such a commonality of values did exist. In fact, white scepticism is currently one of the greatest obstacles to democratically managed sociopolitical reform in South Africa. Surveys show that these reservations are clearly mirrored in the whites' perceptions of the role of blacks in a new sociopolitical order.

Research findings show that South Africans feel uncertain as to whether there is a sufficient commonality of core values to underpin a peaceful transition to a democratic dispensation. According to a survey among a panel of approximately 1 500 decision makers (primarily whites) in November 1991, 52 per cent of the panel believed that blacks and whites did share enough values to negotiate a workable democratic government in South Africa — a third of the panel did not share this view. In the same month during a telephone survey among blacks in the Cape and the PWV area, 53 per cent of the respondents *denied* that there were sufficient common values to create a new democratic South Africa — 40 per cent thought that there were. However, nine months later, during a countrywide telephone survey in August 1992, nearly 60 per cent of the white respondents maintained that blacks and whites did share sufficient interests and values to create a new democratic South Africa.

There is reason to believe that most whites embraced this point of view, not so much out of brotherly love for their black compatriots, but rather as an adaptive response to a situation that strongly suggested that the cost of hanging onto white hegemony would be greater than the cost of ensuring self-preservation through power-sharing, compromise and concessions. White support for power-sharing and consensus politics is therefore more a function of rational egoism than an objective consideration of real options. At the same time white willingness to accommodate black demands will not come cheap. Many whites believe that peace will exact a price that in effect will leave them worse rather than better off — at least initially.

To ensure order and stability, South Africans will have to enter into a mutually acceptable sociopolitical contract in respect of the basic values and decision-making institutions in which the new democratic order should be rooted — an objective that will remain an illusion to the extent that this meeting of minds can be converted into permanent sociopolitical institutions. In the last resort, this sociopolitical contract has to be anchored in a normative mind-set that can be reduced to the values and principles of individual persons who collectively establish the common will which is imperative not only for a culture of democratic government, but also for the construction of a civic culture that can underpin a democratic sociopolitical order.

The latter can arise even if not all the cultural and political requirements for a democratic social contract have so far been satisfied. As democratic institutions take root and obtain broad legitimacy at grassroots level, a democratic civil culture will arise. High educational levels and a fairer distribution of income are therefore not operational imperatives for the establishment of democratic institutions. According to Karl (see Lemarchand 1992:180):

> Patterns of greater economic growth and more equitable income distribution, higher levels of literacy and education, and increases in media exposure may better be treated as the products of stable democratic processes, rather than as the prerequisites of their existence. A civic culture characterised by high levels of mutual trust, a tolerance for diversity, and a propensity for accommodation and compromise could be the result of the protracted functioning of democratic institutions that generate appropriate values and beliefs rather than a set of cultural norms that must be present before these institutions can emerge.

It is a historical fact that South Africa has not been blessed with a tradition of compromise, give-and-take, negotiated and consensual decision-making — hence the high premium placed on the cultivation of a common will and national identity to establish the democratic institutions required to promote the meeting of minds which will ensure the normative basis and legitimacy of these institutions. This is not meant to suggest that a democratic sociopolitical institution cannot take root in South Africa. A democratic political order could arise effectively even if all its basic institutions do not completely satisfy whatever textbook theory of democracy that analysts regard as the one that best conforms to a universally recognised ideal model.

The mass surge of expectations among blacks, in respect not only of the gratification of their needs for prosperity but also of the speed with which they expect to obtain political empowerment, is already assuming dimensions that are not conducive to democratic nation-building and peaceful reconciliation among communities. A combination of government-initiated reform (largely an adaptive response to black demands) and black liberation rhetoric has formed the main thrust behind this mass sociopolitical movement.

If there is one factor in the South African situation that can trigger off mass conflict in this decade, it is the accelerating upward spiral of expectations among the rank and file of blacks in respect of those life chances that for generations the whites have regarded virtually as their birthright. The rate at which the expectations/aspirations rise is in large measure an indicator of blacks' evaluation/perception of their deprivation relative to white norms and standards. In a newsletter issued by the HSRC's Division for Constitution Analysis (No. 3 of 1992) Bertus de Villiers refers to this issue as follows:

> There are signs in the white and black communities of a spiral of unrealistic expectations on what the new South Africa will have to offer. In many cases these expectations are irrational and based on hopes rather than factual circumstances. The inflation of expectations may lead to a situation where whatever is achieved in negotiations, may be seen as insufficient.

He continues:

> It is quite clear that neither the black nor the white community has fully grasped the socioeconomic and political constraints, realities and implications that a fully democratic South Africa will need to face. It would seem that blacks as well as whites are in for a surprise. To blacks the new South Africa will mean far less 'power' than they expect and to whites it will mean far less 'power' than they have currently.

Against the background of rampant black expectations there are sufficient grounds for arguing that the causes of the black unrest can be found in South Africa's sociopolitical institutions, particularly in the structures of social, economic and political inequality which historically developed as the basis of the whites' dominant position in South African society. The black unrest is consequently in large measure the product of the whites' competitive advantage in the opportunity and reward system — an advantage that became institutionalised and which is currently seen by most sophisticated blacks as the primary source of their protest actions.

An analysis of the specific conditions in the black communities that have led to the unrest reveals a cycle of poverty, deprivation, political powerlessness and alienation, a growing gap between expected and actual need satisfaction, an increasing tendency to evaluate black deprivation in universal human rights terms and, finally, the rapidly growing conviction that effective political power at all levels of decision making is the key to restitution and equality — this gives the unrest a political dimension that is daily becoming more apparent. The mainstream of black protest necessarily implies a mainstream of black aspirations essentially defined in universal human rights terms, however elementary and simplistic the underlying definition of the situation may be.

In broad terms black protest is thus largely a function of frustrated black aspirations. The mainstream of these aspirations/protest is defined by a growing number of blacks — especially those in the higher socioeconomic and educational strata — as a liberation movement. A major part of the movement's thrust is generated by rapidly rising expectations concerning the realisation of black aspirations. This collective perception of a liberation movement has by definition implications for the distribution of political power in South Africa.

Most black expectations/aspirations revolve around drastically improved housing, education, medical care, job opportunities, the institutionalisation of basic human rights, and lastly and by no means least, political empowerment. In a nutshell: blacks accept that the dismantling of apartheid under a black majority government will eliminate two fundamental impediments to black advancement, namely black poverty and a lack of political power.

When political entrepreneurs politicise the frustrated black masses and mobilise them to achieve specific political objectives, they raise the conflict potential of unrealised aspirations to a dangerously high level. Absolute deprivation is not the crucial ingredient of mass protest actions. Indeed, there is little empirical evidence to suggest that absolute deprivation (as deduced from objectives criteria of quality of life) correlates strongly with participation in violent protest (see Finkel & Rule 1986:58; Sears & McConahay 1973; McPhail 1971). In terms of the relevant individuals' subjective definition of the situation they can, however, be easily mobilised for mass protest actions when, on the one hand, the gap between expectations and aspirations and, on the other, the level at which these expectations/aspirations are satisfied reach a critical degree of intolerance.

A prerequisite for reconciliation among communities is that the spiral of violence in South Africa be speedily and effectively reduced to manageable proportions. In particular, whites' fears will have to be scaled down as an investment in the democratisation of the state's order and welfare functions. White fears of escalating violence, crime, a punitive redistribution of wealth and property and white distrust of black political parties/movements' true political objectives, as well as the government's inability to control the current unrest, are among the major constraints on a negotiated transition to a post-apartheid democracy in South Africa. White reservations about the ANC/SACP/Cosatu alliance appear to be a serious inhibitor of democratic negotiation in general and of the allaying of white fears in particular.

The degree of the whites' mistrust of the ANC's promise that a future ANC majority government would not tolerate black domination over whites is clearly reflected in recent sample surveys. Findings based on five countrywide surveys undertaken between June 1990 and January 1992 show that, on average, 86 per cent of the white respondents totally disbelieved the ANC's undertaking.

The question is not to what extent these perceptions are substantiated by objective realities, but rather how deeply people believe that an ANC (black) dominant government would pose a threat to their survival-related interests. Eight countrywide sample surveys among whites conducted between March 1990 and January 1992 dramatically underline the rate at which whites' fears for their personal safety escalated between the March 1990 survey and the one in January 1992, namely from 33 per cent to 55 per cent in respect of those respondents who said that they felt unsafe in March 1990 and in January 1992 respectively.

Fear for their personal safety is exacerbated in white ranks by the feeling that the NP Government can no longer contain the present mass violence and that it is therefore incapable of discharging the state's function of maintaining order. In response to the question as to what extent the South African Government still had control over the violence in the country, only 26 per cent of the white respondents in the sample as a whole in April 1992 thought that it had *extensive to full control* over the unrest. An examination of the samples of the four main population groups reveals that in each case relatively few of the respondents in April believed that the government still had control over the violence in South Africa (Indians 20 per cent; whites 26 per cent; coloureds 38 per cent and blacks 24 per cent).

The prevailing sociopolitical instability that is casting such a dark shadow over the whole of South African society is linked to the negative expectations that many people have regarding the country's ability to achieve a peaceful transition to a democratic social order. The longer the current instability persists, the further South Africa's economy will decline to disastrously low levels. Social conflict will increase and contribute to a culture of violence that will indefinitely delay the normalisation of South African society. The country will pay a price in terms of the disruption of communal relations that will inevitably add to the brutalisation of South African society. White scepticism about the chances of sociopolitical stability and a negotiated democratic government is evident from, for example, the results of a countrywide telephone survey among whites in May 1992. A majority of the respondents (53 per cent) thought they would be *worse* rather than better off in the 'new South Africa'.

White fears correlate significantly with the mass political violence occurring since 1984 in South Africa. In particular, the whites' willingness to bargain for a negotiated democratic order is being inhibited by the culture of violence that has already become firmly rooted in South African society. A culture of violence and disorder is irreconcilable with democratic institutions. Although the state's institutions of power can enforce order, they cannot impose democracy. Few informed South Africans will dispute the view that a democratic constitution which is not regarded as legitimate by the broad layers of the polity is a recipe for anarchy and sociopolitical collapse. Likewise, equally few citizens believe that a true democracy can be brought about by governmental decree.

The functional imperatives of institutionalised democracy imply a number of fundamental preconditions that can be complied with optimally in a climate of tolerance, compromise, live and let live, national unity, consensual decision-making, and the conditions that ensure a balance between the order and welfare functions of the state. With most stable democracies, it took decades to create the conditions which enabled the polities concerned to create a viable democratic order. Above all, a workable democracy functions best if a culture of democratic decision-making underpins the welfare and power institutions of the state.

The nineties will provide the answer to the crucial question as to whether there is among most South Africans the necessary meeting of minds that characterises all successful democracies. Do they share the values and standards that are a feature of the mind-set of stable democratic polities? As a generic concept democracy embraces far more than just a formal system of constitutional principles. In the final analysis it incorporates the values and norms according to which the individual is accommodated institutionally in a stable social order. This mind-set and meeting of minds cannot be purchased over a counter or obtained by mail order. At the same time, a conflict-free society is not a prerequisite for the creation of a democratic polity. A major challenge for the competing power groups will nevertheless be to institutionalise as many common values in the mainstream society as possible so that the conflict generated by the competitive action can at least be reduced to manageable proportions.

The overriding issue of the nineties will largely concern the democratisation of the order and welfare functions of the state. Stripped of a collective political mind-set, these functions will not enjoy the legitimacy that is an operational prerequisite for the democratisation of state-building and therefore for the state's basic institutions.

A critical variable which is currently a major positive force behind the rejection of mass violence is the feeling among the majority of blacks that negotiation holds greater benefits for them than violent action. A factor that offers a more favourable prognosis for the nineties is the clear empirical evidence that the overwhelming majority of blacks choose negotiation above mass violence as the road to a democratic social order in South Africa. Two random opinion surveys in August 1991 and August 1992 among adult blacks in South African metropolitan areas indicate that the violence option does not feature prominently among the modalities of democratisation. In August 1992, 85 per cent of the black respondents conceded that they had gained nothing or very little from the violence — 12 percentage points more than a year previously. Asked: 'What do you think will achieve more for your community in the long run — violence or negotiation?', 81 per cent of the black respondents in the August 1992 survey mentioned negotiation. Less than 10 per cent opted for violence.

From an analysis of the available survey data it seems that those blacks who believed that they would derive no benefit from the unrest were also inclined to disapprove of violent protest as an instrument of 'black liberation', and to see negotiation rather than violence as the means of achieving communal reconciliation. Time and again it was found that a strong positive correlation also existed between, on the one hand, blacks' support for reform in general and, on the other, their preference for negotiation (rather than violence) as a means of conflict management.

Negotiations will naturally receive a serious setback if growing numbers of blacks begin to believe that violence may pay dividends in future. For example, the NP government's accelerating reform policy in general, especially the unbanning of the ANC on 2 February 1990, the release of Mr Nelson Mandela on 11 February 1990 and subsequent mass action, may have created the impression among blacks that the government's initiatives could be ascribed at least indirectly and marginally to the ongoing black unrest. Should this perception continue, it may be detrimental to peaceful negotiations in the sense that a growing proportion of blacks may consider mass violence and organised unrest to be viable strategic options.

A factor in the present decade that will serve as an important bulwark against revolutionary conflict is the growing realisation among South Africans of all races that the violence option in the form of a so-called people's liberation movement is becoming less and less of a good investment. Sociopolitical reform is increasingly being seen as yielding a better 'payoff' in the search for a democratic society.

It is of cardinal importance that transitional reform actions should be pre-emptively legitimised to prevent rising expectations and corresponding feelings of relative deprivation from resulting in an upward spiral of mass violence. According to Huntington (1968:359): 'The violence, then, shifts the debate from the merits of reform to the need for public order.' If this shift is too great or too drastic, it could tilt the balance between democratic reform and public order in the direction of public order — which may be dysfunctional for democratic reform in so far as a disproportionate number of socioeconomic and political resources may be utilised merely to prop up the state's function of maintaining order.

Another positive force that promotes the chances of democratic negotiations, reconciliation and compromise is the growing realisation among white centrists in particular that democratic reform has become irreversible. The historical drift in this direction has been manifested in many ways — straws in the wind of change that even comparative laymen have interpreted to indicate the irreversible phasing out of classic apartheid. We are therefore already in the transitional period of the post-apartheid society during which a functional balance between the phasing out of apartheid and sociopolitical order will have to be found.

If the transitional process progresses too slowly it will fuel conflict as surely as will resorting irrationally to ill-considered and untested blueprints that are irreconcilable with the existential dynamics unique to South Africa's sociopolitical order and socio-historical character. In the transition to a post-apartheid society sociopolitical reform in general and the dismantling of apartheid in particular will be legitimised only if the 'have-not' interest groups can be persuaded that the new sociopolitical order is not a sleight of hand by whites to foist neo-apartheid upon the people of South Africa.

Before February 1990 few people in the more sophisticated strata of the South African public had any idea of the combinations and patterns of the sociopolitical and economic forces that are currently determining the overall balance of power in the South African political arena. This interaction of sociopolitical and economic forces intimates the possibility of power-sharing between the strongest political power groups — even a pragmatic alliance or linking of some of these power groups and the institutionalisation of a government of national unity.

The latter mode of power-sharing may be a reality before the end of 1994 — not so much because the main players have suddenly been converted to a commonality of core values and principles, but essentially because of the rational egoism in the various echelons of leadership. What is at issue here is a mind-set that axiomatically dictates to all the main role players that extended competition for power will unleash an interest group — polarised and therefore adversarial — type of power struggle which will eventually lead to mutual destruction. A cataclysmic end which all rational leaders will endeavour to avoid since common sense dictates that no one will emerge as a winner from such a struggle. The comments of Rantete and Giliomee (1992:515) are also relevant as they remark in summary: 'South Africa faces the stiff task of engineering a transition from authoritarian rule to an inclusive democracy and to do so from a position of relative stalemate.'

This realism will promote the mutual accommodation of interest groups that gravitate to the centre of the political and ideological spectrum — a process that is conducive to the establishment of a viable democracy in South Africa and to the forming of political alliances and partnerships, and therefore also to a multiparty government of national unity. Against this background the possibility of a functional pragmatic alliance or partnership involving primarily the NP, ANC and IFP cannot summarily be discounted as far-fetched. What today is disclaimed as far-fetched can easily become the reality of tomorrow. For example, what politician at the time of the 1989 election would have taken the possibility seriously that the SACP in the mid-nineties might be carried on the back of the ANC into a NP/ANC/IFP coalition government?

South Africans will increasingly experience what Lemarchand (1992:178) meant when he asserted that 'if by liberalisation is meant the dismantling of dictatorships', there is good reason to believe that liberalisation is not a prerequisite for democracy. He quotes Bratton and Van de Walle (1992:178) who conclude that 'in some parts of Africa the disintegration of authoritarian rule may be followed by anarchy or intensified corruption'. According to Lemarchand (1992): 'It is one thing for an urban mob, a guerilla army or a national conference to bring about the fall of a dictator; the construction of a democratic polity is an altogether different and far more arduous undertaking.' It is also not possible to create a democratic mind-set and a culture of democratic government by a proclamation in the *Government Gazette*.

Even sociopolitical order is not a guarantee of free democratic institutions. Huntington (1968:7-8) has the authority of history to back him up when he states: 'Men may of course have order without liberty but cannot have liberty without order.' Indeed, he argues that the fundamental sociopolitical challenge in the Third World is not so much freedom as the creation of a legitimate public order. Obviously the reformer would prefer to bring about order through general normative consensus in the population rather than through the mass application of the state's coercive power.

Democracy may well be the light ahead in the tunnel in South Africa's case, but the end of this tunnel will definitely not be reached by instituting the first democratic constitution and establishing a government of national unity based on the first multiparty one-man-one-vote dispensation in this century. It will depend on the extent that South Africans develop manifold and cross-cutting associations and interests, accompanied by an increase in common values, the development of a uniform national identity, reciprocal trust and strong feelings of common loyalty, intercommunal reconciliation and mutual recognition. Already there may well be considerable light ahead but there is a lot of tunnel still left!

History provides ample evidence that reform in the sense of an attempt by a government or a politically dominant class to democratise a society's basic social and political institutions often generates conflict. In the South African context, reform is aimed not only at greater democracy and the expansion of the government's welfare functions, but also at order in the sense, especially, of obedience to certain definite norms and precepts which regulate competition within the political market place. Obviously, the reformer would like to see that the reform process occurs under conditions that will ensure the greatest degree of order and stability. He would, however, not enforce order to the extent that creative conflict is unable to fulfil its natural role as a historical agent of change. Violence and instability are often the price demanded by history if, in a time of rapid modernisation, industrialisation and urbanisation a developing society does not succeed in creating sufficient political institutions to accommodate the rapid political mobilisation of the population.

Political violence will continue to the extent that the disadvantaged sectors of South African society perceive that all the benefits of reform have not yet filtered down to them a situation that Alexis de Tocqueville (see Davies 1971:96) claims was a critical historical determinant of the French Revolution:

> Patiently endured so long as it seemed beyond redress, a grievance comes to appear intolerable once the possibility of removing it crosses men's minds. For the mere fact that certain abuses have been remedied, draws attention to the others and they now appear more galling; people may suffer less, but their sensibility is exacerbated.

Resistance and frustration increase if the challengers believe that the dominant power group will not or cannot deliver the goods. According to De Tocqueville, Louis XVI vowed on one occasion that '"the right to work is man's most sacred possession and any law that tampers with it violates a natural right and should be treated as null and void"... it was indiscreet enough to utter such words, but positively dangerous to utter them in vain' (see Davies 1971:93).

Those who think that the transformation from apartheid to democracy will be an orderly transition to a stable sociopolitical order, therefore, fail to recognise one of the most basic lessons of history. We can also deduce from this lesson that at its inception the envisaged new South African constitution will not be the pot of gold at the end of the political rainbow. A further impediment on the road to a democratic order is the strong possibility that an increasing number of blacks (particularly those in the younger age groups) are developing the perception that violence does pay, and that concessions can be gained by force to the extent that the black challenging group utilises mass political action (especially political violence) as a resource. For example, the recent demonstrations held by owners and drivers of taxis in Johannesburg in order to agitate for specific benefits and the chaos and disruption these caused, compelled the local municipal authority to make substantial concessions within 24 hours to the challengers a clear signal to the black activists that concessions can indeed be exacted by means of mass protest actions a signal that has not gone unseen or unheard by either whites or blacks.

My reasoning is that, taking everything into account, political violence in South Africa can be reduced to manageable proportions only if the NP, the ANC and the IFP in tandem largely succeed in neutralising the basic causes of violence. This strategy need not necessarily be conditional on entering into formal alliances or coalitions. A serious impediment to this cooperation, however, lies in the ANC's preference for strongly centralised decision-making institutions in contrast to the

NP's and IFP's preference for a model of government that would in effect operate as a democratic federation.

However, with South Africa's first non-racial one-man-one-vote election just around the corner, there is one important factor seriously hampering cooperation between the NP, the ANC and the IFP, namely the NP's historical link with apartheid. This means that many people simply interpret all the policy initiatives of the NP government as neo-apartheid. An increasing number of people in the NP leadership echelons feel that a new name for the party is the only effective way of ridding themselves of the apartheid albatross hanging from their corporate neck.

But even if the NP adopt a new name (linked to new symbols and emblems), the chances remain slim that large numbers of black voters, would join the NP in its new garb. Apart from the stigma cast by apartheid, the chances are good that in the anticipated victory of the ANC/SACP/Cosatu alliance in the forthcoming general election, black people will see the symbolic victory of the black man's generations-old struggle for liberation from white colonial domination. Even blacks who are favourably disposed toward the NP government will have difficulty in disengaging themselves from such a collective emotional catharsis — at least not during the first five years under a transitional government.

I wish to conclude that reconciliation, nation-building and the democratisation of South African society will materialise to the extent that the majority of blacks develop the perception that their 'struggle' is no longer a revolutionary liberation struggle, but is a process of accommodation based on democratic principles.

REFERENCES

BRATTON, Michael & VAN DER WALLE, Nicholas. 1992. Toward governance in Africa: popular demands and state responses. In: HYDEN, Goran & BRATTON, Michael (eds). *Governance and polities in Africa*. Boulder: Lynne Reinner.

BROWN-JOHN, C. Lloyd (ed.). 1988. *Centralizing and decentralizing trends in federal states*. London: University Press of America.

DAVIES, James C. (ed.). 1971. *When men revolt and why*. London: Free Press.

DE VILLIERS, B. 1992. Pitfalls for negotiations and democracy. Pretoria: HSRC, Centre for Democracy and Constitutional Analysis, Newsletter No. 3.

FINKEL, Steve E. & RULE, James B. 1986. Relative deprivation and related psychological theories of civil violence. In: LANG, Kurt & KRIESBERG, Louis (eds). *Research in social movements, conflicts and change*. London: JAI Press Inc. Volume 9.

FRIEDRICH, C. J. 1968. *Trends of federalism in theory and practice*. New York: Praeger.

HUNTINGTON, S. P. 1968. *Political order in changing societies*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

KARL, Terry Lynn. 1991. Dilemmas of democratization in Latin America. In: DANKWART, Rustow & KENNETH, Erikson P. (eds). *Comparative political dynamics: global research perspectives*. New York: Harper Collins.

LEMARCHAND, René. 1992. African transitions to democracy. *Africa Insight*, 22(3).

McPHAIL, Clark. 1971. Civil disorder participation: a critical examination of recent research. *American Sociological Review*, 36, December.

RANTETE, Johannes & GILIOMEE, Hermann. 1992. Transition of democracy through transaction? Bilateral negotiations between the ANC and NP in South Africa. *African Affairs*, 91:515-542.

RHOODIE, Nic J. 1992. White suspicions fostered by ANC mass action rhetoric. *South Africa in the Nineties*, 1(3).

SEARS, David & McCONAHAY, John B. 1973. *The politics of violence: the new urban blacks and the Watts riot*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

SMITH, Anthony D. 1986. *The ethnic origins of nations*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

CHAPTER 28

Perspectives on negotiation and mass action in the transition to democratic nation-building

H.W. van der Merwe and Gabi Meyer

'Without the democratisation of South Africa's government institutions, intercommunal reconciliation will remain a mere ideal and in turn, orderly nation-building will be even less attainable' (Rhoodie 1993, see Chapter 27). This observation is an accurate assessment of the current South African crisis, in which any attempt at nation-building will be frustrated until a viable and legitimate political transition has taken place. The crucial question is clearly what mode of transition is going to prevail in the coming months.

The way in which the transition process is managed by the principal players will determine whether a climate for intercommunal reconciliation and nation-building will be possible, or whether escalating polarisation will drive whites and blacks into opposing hostile camps where adversarial win/lose tactics will once again predominate. We therefore argue that a balance needs to be achieved between pacts negotiated by leaders and accountability to their wider constituencies, between the politics of negotiation and the politics of pressure exerted by mass action. Mass action is seen as a positive tactic in so far as it consolidates the mandate of leaders to negotiate. On the other hand, unrealistic black expectations, fuelled by confrontational liberation rhetoric, have great potential to hinder a peaceful and democratic transition. Black leaders will have to deal eventually with the crisis of dissatisfaction caused by 'relative deprivation' when political power — but not dramatically increased life chances — is given to blacks.

After a year of stalled negotiations, mass action and escalating violence, the political mood in South Africa became buoyant when multiparty talks resumed on 1 April 1993. It was felt that Codesa had had a number of flaws, chiefly the level of distrust between the NP government and ANC, but that bilateral talks between these players in the months of apparent stalemate had paved the way for a resumption of negotiations in good faith. Additionally, a number of parties which had previously excluded themselves from Codesa — such as the Conservative Party (CP), Pan-Africanist Congress (PAC), and newly formed Afrikaner-Volksunie (AVU) — were now participating. The presence of so many disparate parties, including the radicals on the right and the left, augured well for a negotiated settlement that could be 'owned' by a wide spectrum of political opinion. The potential of excluded parties to wreck a settlement has been widely recognised. This is why the NP and ANC have tolerated and encouraged the participation of so many small groupings who are otherwise clearly unrepresentative of significant constituencies.

However, in April and early May 1993 the multiparty talks were suffering from a greater image problem than Codesa. The fact that the forum had no name was an indication of the lack of consensus among the parties even on minor matters. Adjournments over technicalities, and the statement of IFP representative Joe Matthews that talk of urgency left him 'stone cold', gave the impression that participants on the right were deliberately stalling and dragging their feet.

On 10 April 1993, ten days after the first multiparty meeting, the Secretary-General of the South African Communist Party (SACP), Chris Hani, was assassinated as part of right-wing attempts to hinder or halt the negotiation process. The countrywide turmoil that ensued brought South Africa closer than ever to an all-out race war. Most ominously, the tragic event served to highlight a widening gap between the ANC leadership and its constituency at grassroots level. On the first day of mourning for Hani, at a stadium in Soweto, Nelson Mandela was booed when he made a conciliatory reference to the condolences sent by the NP. The following weekend, his estranged wife Winnie and ANC youth league leader Peter Mokaba caused a sensation when they addressed a gathering in Khayelitsha, urging the youth to take over the leadership of the ANC, and leading the crowd in a chant of 'Kill the farmer, kill the boer!'. It became evident that young black militants in particular believed that three years of negotiations had delivered them nothing except the murder of one of their greatest heroes.

The ANC response was to declare six weeks of 'rolling mass action' to demand the announcement of an election date. Mass action to pressure the government to a timetable to which it had agreed was clearly a device to retrieve the support of the ANC's angry and disillusioned constituency. This tactic has emerged as a recurring pattern when the ANC is forced to address the frustrations of its followers, and illustrates the precarious balance between its past role as liberation movement and current role as negotiating partner.

During the past three years it has been inevitable that the new style of negotiation politics adopted by the main political leaders would cause tension within their respective constituencies, still steeped in the adversarial political culture of the past. Their pact-forming style has been suspected of lacking transparency and accountability. Rank-and-file supporters have feared that limited reform would be imposed from above by elites engaged in striking secret deals with their opponents. Not only the masses but leaders of other parties have been mistrustful of bilateral talks between the ANC and the government, as evidenced by Inkatha's deep indignation at the Record of Understanding reached between the government and ANC in 1992.

Pact-forming, however, is widely recognised as being an important feature of political transition. Professor Phillippe Schmitter of Stanford University has made a study of societies which have moved from autocracy to democracy in the past two decades. He has identified four main transition modes: reform imposed from above by a controlling elite that feels the need to liberalise; pacts reached through negotiation between government and opponents; reform forced on the government by pressure from below; and revolution brought about by mass mobilisation. He has concluded that pact-forming offers the best hope of achieving a stable democracy, and revolution the worst.

A pact is essentially a compromise agreement negotiated among leaders who, in the interests of a peaceful outcome, offer mutual guarantees protecting each other's vital interests. Pacts are by definition negotiated by a relatively small number of participants; they deliberately limit accountability to the wider public during transition; they are based on efficient management rather than popular legitimacy; and they tend to exclude other leaders whose radicalism is not compatible with a viable transition agenda.

Some phases and features of the negotiation process in South Africa correspond closely to the pact-forming mode, although it must be pointed out that the impetus originally came from pressures from below (Van der Merwe, Liebenberg & Meyer 1991/92:39). Furthermore, the multiparty forum is a conscious attempt to draw into the process the radicals of both right and left.

Pressure also plays an important role in the transition process. There is often a complementary relationship between pressure and negotiation which is not generally perceived, the traditional view being that they are irreconcilable opposites. A measure of coercion is often required to induce parties to negotiate, however, while negotiation improves the quality of communication so that pressure is more rationally and less destructively targeted (Van der Merwe 1989:65). South Africa has witnessed the interplay of these two forces in the past year. Parties have used pressure to compel their opponents to resume negotiations on acceptable terms, and have simultaneously negotiated with local authorities on the conducting of their protest action. In the period of mass action in August 1992 there were several instances in which improved relations were built between radical black leaders and conservative white authorities during the preparations for peaceful protest.

Mass action as a tool of the ANC performs two functions: it exerts pressure on the government, and it mobilises the masses, encouraging their sense of active participation and perpetuating the ANC's image as an uncompromising popular liberation movement which represents their interests. The mass action of August 1992 had a substantially positive effect on ANC/government relations which needs to be highlighted. While the ANC could make a strong claim to represent the majority of the unenfranchised masses, it had entered Codesa at a great disadvantage, lacking diplomatic experience and skills and the resources of a vast civil service.

An important principle of negotiation is that power should be fairly balanced between the adversaries, otherwise the more powerful party will have the leverage to impose an unfair settlement that will not last (Van der Merwe *et al.* 1990:218). When President De Klerk's mandate to negotiate was challenged by the Conservative Party in February 1992, he called a referendum through which his policy of negotiation was massively endorsed. Nelson Mandela had no such mechanism; nevertheless, like De Klerk, he also needed to have his leadership and mandate confirmed. He needed to ascertain and demonstrate his power: through mass action, he could do both. The August mass action was Mandela's referendum. Africans voted with their feet. The success of the mass action boosted the ANC's authority and strengthened its organisational ability and skills. Because the violent elements were successfully contained, it succeeded as a demonstration of non-violent action, while confirming that the ANC had the power to put pressure on the government and to inflict damage if necessary. It was thus an endorsement of the ANC's mandate to negotiate, and as such ought to have been reassuring to whites and to the government.

No government wants to make deals with weak leaders who cannot keep to any terms or deliver on agreements. The negotiators at Codesa had been accused of elitist pact-forming, and both National Party and ANC leaders had experienced serious problems with their constituencies. The March referendum for whites and the August mass action by blacks did much to restore leader-follower relations and the mandates of the leaders, paving the way for improved negotiations in the ensuing months.

It is therefore simplistic to view mass action in a totally negative light and to interpret it as a form of confrontation irreconcilable with negotiation. As Van Zyl Slabbert has pointed out, elements of both confrontation and negotiation will characterise the actual dynamics of the transition process in South Africa.

Nevertheless, sustained mass action, dating back to the earlier policy of the ANC in the 1980s 'to make the country ungovernable', has now created its own momentum which threatens to leave the politicians behind. In the volatile political climate of mid-1993, it has often exploded into mass hysteria and wilful destruction, completely beyond the control of recognised political leaders. Furthermore, street politics and militant rhetoric do not in any way prepare the masses for the inevitability of compromise in a negotiated settlement, but serve rather to fuel expectations which any future government will find impossible to meet.

Although indications are that power will be transferred to a predominantly black government in 1994, South African society will continue to be plagued by violent conflict. The social devastation caused by apartheid and the effects of modernisation and urbanisation have had a profoundly disturbing effect on traditional values, family life and social institutions. Structural inequality, limited resources and an absence of shared social values will continue to provoke conflict in a number of areas, especially when unrealistic black aspirations are not met and white living standards continue to drop (Van der Merwe & Odendaal 1992). Such dissatisfaction will be directed principally against the new establishment, and Mandela instead of De Klerk will be the target.

The Hani assassination has made an early settlement and election more urgent than ever. But the large number of participants at the multiparty forum, many of whom are clearly pursuing their own incompatible agendas, makes it unlikely that this forum alone will be able to produce the early settlement required to prevent the country from sliding further into anarchy. In a radio interview on the SABC at the beginning of May, Professor Robert Schrire expressed the opinion that, in the event of a deadlock, the NP and ANC might have to resume bilateral talks in preference to multilateral talks, and that those parties unwilling to come on board the train would have to be left behind at the station. This of course would jeopardise the inclusiveness of the current negotiating forum and create a dangerous situation in which marginalised parties might turn more readily to the violent, destructive option. However, unnecessary delays in negotiations will heighten the possibility of moderate leaders being outbidden by the extremists on the right and the left.

In political transitions there are tensions between peace and efficiency on one hand and popular legitimacy on the other; and the most peaceful and efficient settlement will not, in our view, be the most popular and democratic. This dilemma is being acutely manifested in South Africa at present.

While a viable settlement will have to enjoy legitimacy, it will also have to satisfy the deep-rooted needs of all the major groups in South Africa. This will inevitably involve pacts, guarantees and compromises. It is therefore essential that leaders on all sides prepare their followers for compromise, and that these constituencies be educated to move away from the adversarial win/lose political culture and rhetoric of the past. At the same time, confrontation and pressure should be interpreted within the wider perspective already suggested. While immense harm is being done by the current spate of uncontrolled and criminal violence, disciplined coercion as manifested in controlled mass action forms an integral part of the political process and is not irreconcilable with negotiation.

REFERENCES

VAN DER MERWE, Hendrik W. 1989. *Pursuing justice and peace in South Africa.* London: Routledge.

VAN DER MERWE, Hendrik W., LIEBENBERG, Ian & MEYER, Gabi. 1991/92. Changing political styles in South Africa. *Peace Review,* Winter 38-40.

VAN DER MERWE, Hendrik W., MAREE, Johann, ZAAIMAN, Andre, PHILIP, Cathy & MULLER, A. D. 1990. Principles of communication between adversaries in South Africa. In: BURTON, John & DUKES, Frank (eds). *Conflict: readings in management and resolution.* New York: St Martin's Press.

VAN DER MERWE, Hendrik W., & ODENDAAL, Andries. 1992. From confrontation to mediation. In: BOULDING, Elise. (ed.). *New agendas in peace research: conflict and security reexamined.* Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner.

CHAPTER 29

National liberation and the quest for democratic nation-building

Zola Skweyiya

Racial discrimination, a legacy of colonialism in the South African context, has subjugated the majority in this country to a form of domination characterised by political exclusiveness and a plethora of mechanisms devised for its maintenance.

This pattern of domination throughout South African history, has changed its form in response to the various political conditions that have prevailed at different times. However, the socioeconomic inequalities among the South African racial groups, as defined by the apartheid laws, have been the constant feature of this brand of domination (Nogxina 1973).

The disenfranchisement of black people and the resultant monopolisation of centralised state power by the white minority is the central feature of the apartheid system. Although in the course of the evolution of apartheid blacks have been coopted as an essential component of this process, power has predominantly remained in white hands, both in terms of the formal 'democratic' processes and in terms of the manning of the state bureaucracies and governmental agencies.

It was in response to this political marginalisation of the majority of the South African population that the struggle for national liberation developed. The intensification of the struggle against apartheid deepened the crisis of legitimacy that bedevilled the apartheid regime and its institutions.

During the latter part of the 1980s the South African political scenario could be characterised on the one hand as a reflection of the political stalemate arising from the liberation movements' inability to pursue the struggle decisively to the point at which the apartheid state could be overthrown. On the other hand, the South African regime chronically suffered from the malaise of the legitimacy crisis making it unable to continue to maintain its dominance without resorting to the naked application of force.

The events of 2 February 1990 took place in the context of this political stalemate between the anti-apartheid forces on the one hand and the apartheid state on the other. It was this legitimacy crisis of the apartheid constitutional order that forced the Pretoria regime to recognise the need to address the crisis as a matter of urgency. The regime then resorted to 'reform' policies that were designed merely to change the complexion of apartheid while its essential features remained intact underneath.

Indeed, it is only those who turned a blind eye to the developments which characterised southern Africa during the late eighties who could have failed to notice that white domination in this region was approaching its demise. The certainty of the fall of the apartheid system gave momentum to the struggle.

This chapter will look at the tortuous path towards democracy that the South African society has trodden. This will be done first by making an overview of the erosion of the apartheid system and the concomitant growth of the democratic movement. We shall then proceed to look at the democratic state-building within the context of democratic pluralism. Finally, the chapter will address the socioeconomic inequalities which our history will bequeath to a democratic state and the measures that can be employed to redress this.

THE EROSION OF APARTHEID AND THE ADVENT OF THE DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENT

It is instructive to outline briefly the characteristic features of the political terrain since the accession of the National Party to power. This will enable us to understand the structural transformations that the political terrain has undergone over the years and the nature of the political contestation that has been shaped by various political factors during different historical junctures.

It is through the prism of political contestations that the erosion of the apartheid system and the concomitant rise of the democratic movement can be viewed. For this reason Wolpe (1988) argues that understanding of the political conjuncture in any given period requires a specific historical analysis which is not solely reduced to a descriptive account of struggles and events. He suggests that this can be achieved by analysing not only the prevailing struggles, but also the structural conditions which mark the character of a period and provide the specific context against which the content and direction of political conflicts can be understood.

The conflict between the state and the people has manifested itself both in the rural and the urban settings. In the rural areas the introduction of the new state-sponsored institutions and the employment of the chiefs as government policy enforcement agencies engendered widespread social upheavals in the various parts of South Africa.

The imposition of the government-created institutions of township administration created a political climate which actuated the transformation of townships into areas of chronic conflict between township residents and the authorities. Resistance to these structures was prompted by the perception that they were designed to deny the black population authentic political representation.

Various educational grievances engendered a gradually mounting tension between the students and the authorities which culminated in the cataclysmic events of 16 June 1976. The combination of a strong student rebellion during the 1980s with general dissatisfaction with the township administrative structures within the broad population brought about a conjuncture of circumstances in which these groups could collaborate and form a pivotal point on which a broader mobilisation against the whole system of government could be mounted.

These outbursts of mass political energy contributed significantly to the political situation which characterised the period immediately before the negotiation process. The anti-apartheid struggle engendered a consciousness of mass popular unity which transcended the tribal, ethnic, racial and religious cleavages found in South African society.

Indeed, it was during this period that the mass democratic movement — comprising a wide spectrum of organisations ranging from students, labour and civic organisations to political formations — made its mark in the South African political landscape. It is noteworthy that, internationally, this period provided us with evidence that mass participation could be an effective instrument to bring about multiparty democracy in those countries which hitherto had one-party rule; competitive elections could be introduced to dislodge the long entrenched rulers, thus ushering in new political dispensations.

Political changes do not take place in a vacuum, however, but within specific socio-political settings defined and shaped by each polity's historical evolution.

Although as the mass movements can bring about the demise of unpopular regimes, they cannot in themselves transform the underlying structural conditions that led to the outbursts of mass political energy in the first place.

DEMOCRATIC PLURALISM AND DEMOCRATIC STATE-BUILDING

The precolonial, the colonial and the apartheid heritages will, to a large extent, influence and condition the genesis of the democratic state in South Africa. Some of the social institutions that prevailed before the advent of colonialism survived the transformational processes to which the colonialists and the apartheid regime subjected them. South African society is therefore a rainbow of different cultural and political shades inherited from the history of the country and the ethnic diversity that characterise its population.

Most countries in present-day Africa are inhabited by many nationalities. This has caused these states to be haunted by a constant threat of a real or potential ethnic conflict. The situation in South Africa is further compounded by the fact that ethnicity was manipulated by the apartheid state for political purposes. This politicisation of ethnicity will require that the new government should adopt policies which will ensure equality in our diversity.

Asmelash Beyene (1991:129) argues that ethnicity-engendered conflicts can be temporarily contained or suppressed but there is no guarantee that the problems will be eliminated: 'Hence there is a need for a political vision and statesmanship of the highest order calculated at removing the causes of conflict, thereby ensuring a political community where equality and justice prevail in the country.'

We need to create a stable and viable multi-ethnic and non-racial state bound together by common loyalty and citizenship.

The founding constitution should function as the cement of our politically divided society which will generate national unity while providing space for, and recognising the existence of, cultural diversity. Such a constitution must enshrine a decentralised governmental system which will allow the exercise of power by the various regions of our country with some degree of autonomy compatible with national unity and geographical integrity of the nation-state. According to Abdullahi Ahmed An-Na'iman (1991) an existing state can guarantee genuine self-determination to all its peoples through a variety of constitutional devices, including appropriate internal arrangements regarding autonomy and self-governance of its constituent parts.

Although what An-Na ' iman is saying might be true for the rest of Africa, it would be very difficult to apply to South Africa in view of the fact that the people of South Africa have always struggled to exercise the right of self-determination for all the people of South Africa. The solidarity that they have received from the world has been based on that premise.

The right to self-determination is now firmly entrenched in international human rights jurisprudence as belonging to 'all peoples' for them 'to freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development'. In underpinning their argument on this right, some people have justified their quest for secession from already existing states. However, despite its formal recognition, the conception of the right to self-determination is still an amorphous notion which needs more specification.

Inasmuch as self-determination is recognised as a right we must safeguard against the risk of the total disintegration of what, for years, has been a single entity. Again, our experience under apartheid has alerted us to the possibility of the use of the argument for self-determination as a ploy to perpetuate the privileged positions that some groupings have enjoyed at the expense of the rest of the South African population. Another danger is that once the right to self-determination has been countenanced for one people within the existing state, chances that other peoples may claim similar treatment are very high. This can lead to a systematic dismembering of the state or its ultimate disintegration. The form which the new democratic state takes will inevitably be influenced by the objective which the people of South Africa seek to achieve. Given the divisive effect that apartheid had on our society, the process of democratic state-building should entail the knitting together of the South African state dismembered by apartheid. Our goal should be the transformation of an oppressive state built on racial division and inequality into a democratic one that will serve the interests of the whole South African nation.

REDRESSING THE LEGACY OF APARTHEID

The legacy of colonialism and apartheid which plunged South Africa into an economic, political and social crisis was deepened by sustained mass mobilisation and international isolation. For decades various forces within the white ruling minority employed their exclusive access to political and economic power to promote their parochial sectional interests at the expense of the black population. As a result, the majority of the South African population has been systematically excluded both from the economic and the political realms, thus creating a situation in which our country has one of the most unequal patterns of wealth and income distribution in the world.

The essence of the ongoing negotiation process is to transform South African society from one of institutionalised racial discrimination into that of a just, equitable and democratic one. The central question which needs to be addressed is related to the prospects for economic growth, redistribution, political stability and social reconstruction in South Africa. It is a historical truism that income disparities among the country's citizens not only pose a threat to the entire democratisation process but also serve to polarise societies into the politically destabilising dualism of those who are economically well-off on the one hand, and those who are the victims of biting poverty on the other. Indeed, throughout the world, democracy and the general enjoyment of human rights have been paralysed and, to some extent thwarted, by historically evolved patterns of unfair wealth distribution. This, accordingly, places income distribution among one of the most critical issues which should be prioritised by the new political dispensation — precisely because democracy is itself contingent upon equal fair income distribution. Ghai and Hewitt de Alcantara (1991:39) describe the relationship between income distribution and democracy as follows: 'History suggests that increasingly polarised societies in which growing numbers are pauperised, are enormously handicapped in the search for democracy.'

It is only when the majority of the population derive material satisfaction from the prevailing political order through the qualitative improvement of their lives that democracy has a meaning to them. Political power in the hands of the people is an empty shell if it does not serve to progressively uplift the economically downtrodden to a level at which they will effectively enjoy a meaningful and dignified life.

The present political changes that characterise both African and Latin American countries are rooted in a series of social struggles manifesting themselves within these societies. In most countries such struggles have been sparked off by the failure of independence to dislodge the deeply rooted social and economic inequalities engendered by colonialism.

Independence has often been perceived to have ushered in regimes bent on enriching a small class of political elite while simultaneously consigning the majority of their fellow citizens to misery and biting poverty. The erosion of legitimacy that marred the post-colonial administrations flowed from their poor and inadequate economic performance, and consequently their distributional capacity.

South Africa, as an emergent democracy, will have to address a wide range of other issues which are inextricably connected with the whole democratisation process. Indeed, the specificity of the country's historical and political evolution in the final analysis will shape and define the form and the nature of these issues.

As South Africa steadily but surely moves away from the darkness of apartheid into the sunshine of democracy, we must be mindful of the truism that the acquisition of political power will not *per se* uproot the accumulated legacy of generations of structured advantages and disadvantages which history is bound to bequeath to us.

Although South Africa should politically democratise, our efforts will be hamstrung by the social and economic inequalities which our specific history has deeply ingrained in the fabric of our society. We therefore need to look for economic reform strategies that will be commensurate with our democratisation objective.

The failure on the part of a democratic government to restore economic growth will result in the decline of people's living standards. Among the black majority this will bring about the crisis of expectations which the liberation struggle generated. In turn this will cause erosion of the government's legitimacy, thus sparking off the same political instability that bedevilled the apartheid regime.

Affirmative action

The democratic transformation of our society should be predicated upon a constitutional order reflecting the history of our people and accordingly embodying specific remedies to heal the scars afflicted by apartheid. Affirmative action can be employed as one of those remedies as it directly challenges the sanctity of the original distribution of property, resources and entitlements under colonialism and, later, apartheid.

Our new constitutional dispensation must impose a duty on the post-apartheid state to achieve equality among the various social groups in our country. Cheryl Harris (1991) describes affirmative action as an instrument of equality when she avers that: 'reclaiming the principle of affirmative action begins the essential work of reconceptualising ideas of equality, power, property and rights from the perspective of those whose access to all these has been limited by reason of their oppression those who are at the bottom'.

The democratisation process inevitably has to address the status and role of women. This should not be seen as a mere public relations exercise but rather as a serious endeavour to address the expectations and desires of women to play a constructive role in the building of democracy. Law and practice keep South African women out of their rightful place — helping to build democracy and enabling a new nation to evolve — while depriving them of their human rights as individuals (Skweyiya 1992).

While recognising that there is a general problem of illiteracy, there is, however, an urgent need to address specifically the illiteracy of women, especially rural women who are most badly affected. All pieces of legislation which discriminate against women have to be reviewed with a view to repealing them in order to liberate women from this perpetual bondage. No nation that keeps more than 50 per cent of its population in bondage can ever prosper.

Mere granting of decrees of equality will not have the desired effect. What is needed is a process of socialisation whereby legal rights would be recognised and entrenched in order to promote women's interests and to increase their participation. In addition to narrowing the gender gap in social relations, there is a further need to examine the linguistic and social barriers — particularly the disrespectful manner in which women are addressed on the language that portrays them as lesser beings. Democratic rights are basic human rights that include the rights of women.

Socioeconomic rights constitutionalised

The biggest challenge facing the Government of National Unity will be to ensure that the revolution of rising expectations of the majority is not turned into a counterrevolution of rising frustrations. Simply put, the question is, how will it address the issue of rising unemployment, housing, illiteracy, poverty, disease, etc.? Socioeconomic rights can never be adequately addressed outside genuine economic independence.

The new government will be faced with the necessity of radically transforming the system to suit the needs of the majority of the people. Once state power has been transferred to the majority, then it can be effectively utilised as a mechanism to transform society. There must be no illusions; it will take a long time before we see a shift in socioeconomic relations. One of the legacies of apartheid rule will be a weak and a devastated economy. A massive capital injection will definitely be required so that the new government may embark on development programmes aimed at combating this legacy. The international development world is currently dominated by the development ideology emphasising increased reliance on economic growth in itself as a guarantor of social and economic rights. This is predicated upon exclusively market-based approaches towards development and does not always bring about the desired results in all social settings.

Although it has to be recognised that economic growth is necessary for the successful realisation of economic, social and cultural rights, it has to be accepted that this does not by itself amount to a panacea for all economic and social problems. Armata Sen (1990:53) alludes to the limitations of the market mechanism in distributing the socioeconomic benefits to the people as follows: 'The market can indeed be a great ally of individual freedom in many fields, but the freedom to live long without succumbing to preventable morbidity and mortality calls for a broader class of social instruments.'

The undue emphasis market-oriented development approaches lay on market and economic growth to promote broader social development goals somewhat undermine the responsibility of the government to achieve these goals. However, history has adequately shown that many aspects of social policy cannot be attained through blind reliance on market forces. In our particular socioeconomic environment, it goes against the grain to leave the victims of apartheid to the mercy of the market forces. The goal to bear in mind is that fair and equitable wealth distribution is necessary for the political stability in our society.

From the constitutional point of view it can be argued that the individual's participation in economic life is a right. The coincidence of the deprivation of political rights and the ruthless economic exploitation under apartheid shows the error of divorcing political rights from socioeconomic rights. Adopting the traditional definition of human rights will have the effect of limiting the Bill of Rights only to the first generation rights. This inevitably excludes economic rights and those other rights that depend on economic abilities (Maduna 1992). This will mean, for instance, that all will be equal before the law but only those who can afford to pay legal fees will reap the fruits of such 'equality'.

One of the problems that has bedevilled the rights theory throughout its development is the question of enforcement of a right. This question encapsulates within itself a series of other germane issues ranging from the definition of: Who is entitled to enforce the particular right? And against whom? But if we look at the inclusion of socioeconomic rights in a Bill of Rights as a collective way of addressing the social harm that discrimination has inflicted upon the majority of our people, the notion of enforceability should not be confined only to justiciability. In the constitutional discourse, there is, an adherence by some scholars to the traditional argument that if they are to make any sense, rights should be enforceable. Indeed, the constitution should become an instrument for ensuring that all enshrined rights can be effectively exercised. But should we circumscribe the definition of enforceability within the narrow purview of justiciability if our aim is to extend social justice to all?

Shivji (1991:45) has argued that even where rights are justiciable, their practical value to the great mass of ordinary citizens, owing to a range of other factors, is insignificant. The most significant of such factors is the inaccessibility to professional representation and the courts. This is actuated by the material conditions of the bulk of the population. It is on this basis that Shivji concludes: 'Thus because of its severe limitations, justiciability per se cannot be considered the most crucial test of the significance of rights in a constitution.'

Shivji further suggests that the restructuring of the notion of enforceability to justiciability is rather narrow. This is true, if one considers the technicalities and demand for resources that accompany the process of justiciability. If the enforcement of rights is designed to serve the interest of the disadvantaged, some flexibility in approach that eschews technicalities should be considered.

The international instruments are non-justiciable and yet they play a major role in setting up standards and guiding policy formulation among the various countries that have ratified them. In the same vein, the socioeconomic rights in a bill of rights can be of invaluable use as the standards by means of which the behaviour of government organs can be measured. Nwabueze (1973) correctly sums up the position when he observes that although these rights are non-justiciable, 'their explicit affirmation in the constitution has value in investing them with the quality of consitutional norms which the rulers must endeavour to observe and respect'.

It is in this context that the ANC's Draft Bill of Rights (Constitutional Committee of the ANC 1993) makes provisions for social, economic, educational and welfare rights, for the state to undertake a programme of legislative and executive action, to bring about a progressive realisation of these rights for the whole population. Positive responsibility is cast upon the state to guarantee by law a progressively expanding minimum floor of rights. However, this responsibility is subject to the availability of resources.

REFERENCES

AN-NA'IMAN, Ahmed Abdullahi. 1991. The national question, secession and constitution: the mediation of competing claims to self-determination. In: SHIVJI Issa G. (ed.). *State and constitutionalism.* Harare: SAPES Books.

BEYENE, Asmelash. 1991. The nationality question, secession and constitutionalism: the case of Ethiopia. In: SHIVJI Issa G. (ed.). *State and constitutionalism.* Harare: SAPES Books.

CONSTITUTIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS. 1993. *ANC Draft Bill of Rights.* Preliminary revised version. Centre for Development Studies, University of the Western Cape.

HARRIS, Cheryl. 1991. *Preliminary thoughts on the origin of affirmative action: the origin of conflict.* Unpublished paper delivered at the University of the Western Cape.

DE ALCANTARA, Hewitt & Ghai. 1991. *The IMF and the South.* London: Zed Press.

MADUNA, Penuell Mpapa. 1992. *Judicial control of executive and legislative powers of government.* Dissertation submitted in fulfilment of the degree of Master of Law. University of the Witwatersrand.

NOGXINA, Sandile. 1973. *Popular justice in South Africa.* Dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of a Master of Law degree in Law in Development. University of Warwick, Coventry, UK.

NWABUEZE, B.O. 1973. *Constitutionalism in the emergent states.* London: Churstc Comp.

SEN, Armata. 1990. *Individual freedom as a social commitment. New York Review of Books,* xxxvii(10).

SHIVJI, Issa G. 1991. State and constitutionalism a new democratic perspective. In: SHIVJI, I. G. (ed.). *State and constitutionalism: an African debate on democracy.* Harare: Sapes Publishers.

SKWEYIYA, Z. 1992. *Rooting democracy on African soil.* Community Law Centre, University of the Western Cape.

SKWEYIYA, Z. 1993. *Economic democracy and constitutional debate.* Paper delivered at a conference on economic democracy: a vision for South Africa, Johannesburg.

WOLPE, Harold. 1988. *Race, class and the apartheid state.* London: James Currey.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

SECTION

VII

GENDER EQUALITY AS A PRECONDITION FOR DEMOCRATIC NATION-BUILDING

CHAPTER

30 Reconstruction: the path to non-sexist nation-building
Jenny Schreiner

31 Women, civil society and citizenship: a reaction to Schreiner
Amanda Gouws

32 The path to non-sexist nation-building: gender issues
Sr Bernard Ncube

33 Response to the comments by Gouws and Ncube
Jenny Schreiner

34 Women and their role in political, social and economic change in South Africa
Mankoko Molete

CHAPTER 30

Reconstruction: the path to non-sexist nation-building

*Jenny Schreiner**

The writing of this chapter has been savagely interrupted by the assassination of Comrade Chris Hani, one of South Africa's true national heroes and a leader deeply committed to the emancipation of women and to the liberation of working-class women and men. His long-term view of a socialist South Africa did not contradict his active and practical engagement in the process of national democratic revolution and reconstruction. His stature as a figure of unity in the South African nation has been graphically illustrated by the diversity of people who have sent messages of condolence, and by the unprecedented size of the response by angry people. South Africa has been denied the experience of seeing Comrade Chris's contribution to the process of nation-building.

His loss will be felt in a number of ways during the process of consolidating the South African nation — first, his appeal to the masses of South African people, and particularly his credibility with the youth of our land, gave him a special place in mobilising the energy of the majority of people for a programme of national reconstruction, and a crucial role among forces aiming at preventing civil war in our land; second, he was one of the few national leaders who was genuinely and practically committed to women's emancipation and equal participation in all spheres of society; third, he was a creative thinker and doer who was not afraid to propose new solutions to address old problems; fourth he understood, in theory and practice, the importance of combining the national level political process of negotiation and governance with grassroots, community and workplace-based mass struggles, both now and as an ongoing feature of a democratic country.

---

* With contributions and comments from women and men in the African National Congress (ANC) and South African Communist Party (SACP), and from other researchers into gender relations.

It is for those who are left to try to understand how he would have approached this monumental task and to build the free South Africa that he 'wanted to live in, even if [he] had to lay his life down for it'.

There are many definitions of nationhood and nationality — a debate which I am not going to enter into here. What must be emphasised though is that I am referring to the building of nationhood on the basis of the nation-state, as opposed to nationality on the basis of national groups within a country's boundaries, defined in terms of language, land and identity. The birth of the nation-state as a political entity is a relatively recent development in world history, dating from the late 1800s. This challenges the notion that the manner in which a nation is built is pre-given. Nationhood is achieved within a nation-state when the citizens of that country perceive themselves as having a common identity, a nationality, a patriotism to that nation-state.

Nationhood is a product of history, a result of the struggles waged by people who are united into particular organisations around specific ideological, political and economic programmes within a nation-state. Nation-building is a social process which takes place within the context of prevailing class and social forces inside and outside the nation-state. The South African nation will not be born on the day of acceptance of a democratic constitution, but will emerge through the process of completion of the national democratic revolution.[1]

It must be emphasised that nationhood in Africa is a product of colonialism. Nation-building in Africa has been a particularly traumatic process as a result of the imposition of colonial boundaries on indigenous communities to form nation-states. These boundaries took little notice of language and cultural boundaries or of regions of historical conflict, resulting in nations in Africa being defined -from above and hence unstable. These colonial boundaries have been accepted by the OAU with the result that, even in post-colonial Africa, nations are split by divisions of various kinds. The process of nation-building and stability therefore has a particular complexity in Africa.

In South Africa, the task of nation-building which faces us in the near future cannot be premised on narrow nationalism. We face a situation in which nationalisms have predated the existence of the nation; and the nationalism of the South African state has been both racist and sexist. The special type of colonialism which shaped South Africa's political history has imposed on this country a polity of a special type — one which only later included white women, and one which has never included black people on an equal basis with whites.

The birth of citizenship in South Africa was not an inclusive process — white women were excluded from citizenship until the suffrage movement won the vote for white women in 1930. In the Cape Province the vote was given to certain African people on the basis of education and property. In the 1950s, the vote was taken away from the coloured people, and when it was given back to the coloured and Indian people in the 1983 constitution, it was a second-class citizenship, allowing for representation in a second and third chamber. The issue of citizenship has been a rallying call of democratic organisations and the liberation movement since early in this century, starting with a call for a non-racial and non-sexist franchise from the SACP in the 1920s.

The experience of white women in South Africa after they won the right to vote is also informative for this discussion on building a non-sexist nation. Despite having won the vote, white women remain seriously underrepresented in political life. The white Parliament has had a total of 18 women MPs in its life span of 83 years, 20 of those being years in which women were neither allowed to vote nor stand for election; and there have only been six white women senators. The first woman minister was appointed in 1989. Since the Tricameral Parliament, there have been five women MPs in the Houses of Delegates and Representatives. These statistics, and the fact that even the vote for a particular section of South African women has not prevented gender discriminatory legislation from being passed, highlight the need for affirmative action for women alongside affirmative action on a racial basis, to be integral to the process of nation-building.

Nation-building in South Africa is the challenge to overcome the narrow and sectional interests that have been, and often are, mobilised in South Africa through appeals to the concepts of nation and nationhood. The legacy of Afrikaner nationalism, Inkatha's narrow appeals to Zulu nationalism, and the commitment of the extreme right-wing to their own definition of their nation and the demand for self-determination, do not contribute to the process of nation-building. It is in the vision of a unitary South African state that we will find the building blocks of a future nation. The South African nation has to be inclusive, and this chapter will argue that it has to be inclusive of South African women, black and white, rich and poor, middle and working class, and furthermore that this inclusion has to involve more than merely the granting of the franchise to all.

The complexity of the last 340 years of South African history can best be approached through identifying two nations:

> 'The great disadvantage of the one nation thesis is, then, that it obscures the colonial nature of our society and in consequence the national character of our liberation struggle. It is this flaw that the two nation thesis is deliberately designed to counter ... This view holds essentially that South Africa is a

> colonial situation of a special type in which two nations, an oppressing nation and an oppressed nation, live side by side within the same territory ...' (Molapo).

However, we need to go further than this to understand the divisions among both the oppressed and the oppressor nations.

For the purposes of this chapter, we must add that a certain mode of colonialism is racist and patriarchal. Oppressed and oppressor nations are both cut across by racial/ethnic and gender divisions.[2] Within the class structures of these nations we find that women are relegated to the lowest strata, being the most oppressed and most exploited of each class. In terms of racial inequality, it must be acknowledged that African women are socially, politically and economically more disadvantaged than women of other racial groups.

What has apartheid meant for the majority of women? Women's lives have been lives of hard struggle — for bread for their children, for their own health, for jobs, for a future for their children, for basic political rights. South African women have a history of private struggle against apartheid and poverty, while at the same time building a tradition of mass organisation for a better life and for basic human and political rights. This dual struggle has simultaneously faced women with almost crippling, disempowering burdens, and empowered them through active struggle and organisation.

The strength of South African women and their varied organisational histories needs to be harnessed in the process of reconstruction and nation-building. Among South African women are people who have never had things given to them, and who have managed despite this, to build a better life with their own hands. Reconstruction should become a process of mobilisation of the resources of all South Africans, women and men, young and old, poor and rich, to create what apartheid has denied to the majority of people.

The task of nation-building is one of welding a nation out of a society fractured by the brutality and divisions of artificial racial barriers, cultural differences, class and economic divisions, ideological splits, the oppressive gender gap, religious diversity and wide social inequality and discrimination. It entails overcoming the apartheid legacy and constructing a new social definition for the citizens of South Africa. This process is not merely a cultural or ideological process but must be rooted in changed socioeconomic and political circumstances for the majority of South Africans.

This chapter has the impossible task of covering all the ground contained in the rest of the book in a gender-sensitive manner[3], while also dealing with the specific issue of women's rights and the struggle for women's emancipation. Obviously this cannot be done in the short space allocated. The chapter has therefore been structured around three themes which are central to non-sexist nation-building:

- Patriarchy as resilient social relations in a period of change;
- affirmative action for women within a class-based society undergoing transformation; and
- reconstruction and development as crucial to women's participation, and particularly participation by working class women in nation-building and 'inter-communal reconciliation'.

BACKGROUND CONTEXT: WOMEN IN SOUTH AFRICAN SOCIETY

Too often analysis of gender relations in South Africa talks of women as if we are a monolithic category. No strategy of reconstruction, nation-building, affirmative action, etc., can seriously address the conditions of women if this approach is adopted.

For example, 54 per cent of the South African population are female, but if we examine demographic trends in terms of gender, in town and countryside, in Bantustans, provinces and regions, the population is very unevenly distributed. Women are located predominantly in regions which are economically under-developed. The significance of this demography is that many women do not live in traditional nuclear or extended families. In both urban and rural areas, the female-headed household has been prevalent since the 1940s. Although this pattern can be attributed to influx control and apartheid's migrant labour system, Budlender has argued that it is a trend within Third World countries and is unlikely to be reversed by democratisation in South Africa.

It is not possible to do justice to the complexity of divisions and differences among South African women in a chapter of this length, so I have merely attempted to draw from some of the analyses that most usefully reflect the reality of South African women.[4] Later in the chapter, I have generalised some of the areas of oppression that women experience, but in this section I have tried to lay a basis for my analysis by using the economic position of women as the linchpin.

As I will show later, gender relations affect all areas of life, and thus the struggle for non-oppressive gender relations cannot be reduced to a single sector of struggle. My reason for taking the economic position of women as a starting point is that this line of division among women also cuts into every area of life. While women all share in the experience of patriarchy, the manner in which they experience this differs fundamentally, depending on their financial position and economic access.

This can best be explained by comparing the opportunities facing two women from different class backgrounds. A rural woman who works on the farm in a labourtenant capacity and a wife of a business executive may both experience patriarchal attitudes from men. The farmworker woman has little opportunity to act against this since her job, house and food are dependent both on her relationship with her husband and on her continued employment by the farmer. Should she challenge either of these she runs the risk of being without money, house, job and with little recourse to law. The business executive's wife has financial resources, a car, legal protection and the favour of the court in terms of familial resources such as the house. She has room to decide to move out of a gender-oppressive situation and to start life anew, even if not quite at the level to which she has been accustomed. Building a non-sexist nation has to recognise these very deep economic differences in the experience of women if it is to be a process that is inclusive of all women, and not just of wealthy and skilled women. Nation-building cannot be divorced from the socioeconomic differences in the society or from the causes of the enormous socioeconomic disparities in South Africa. Nation-building is not purely a political question of giving the South African people the vote. It is also a question of addressing the fundamental needs of the majority of South Africans. This is central to the process of national democratic transformation, the basis on which the South African nation can be built.

Economic condition of women – the need for gender-sensitive development and reconstruction

Skill levels and racial and gender divisions of labour tend to coincide, producing a hierarchy with white men at the top and African women at the bottom. A cursory glance at the socioeconomic position of most women in South Africa will give substance to the statement that black, working-class women are the most oppressed and exploited South Africans. Thirty per cent of African households in metropolitan areas of South Africa are without male breadwinners; 47 per cent of Bantustan urban households and 59 per cent of 'bantustan' rural households are female-headed. Only 36,4 per cent of the paid and registered workforce are women, and approximately three quarters of these are employed in four sectors: service, agriculture, clerical and sales, and professional (teaching and nursing). The majority of these women are employed in domestic work and on farms two of the worst paid, most vulnerable and least organised sectors. In all of these areas, excluding domestic work, there is a small percentage of more highly skilled men. Of the 1,3 million black workers on white-owned farms, approximately one quarter are women. Within each class of society, women's socioeconomic position is lower than that of men.

These statistics highlight the need for reconstruction and development with a specific gender bias. It has been coherently argued that development policy needs to correct a 'poverty bias' in order to address the needs of the poorest communities.

Similarly, researchers and development workers need gender training in order to be equipped to renegotiate the boundaries between the natural or biological (and hence relatively inflexible), and the social (relatively transformable) aspects of life. The term 'relative' must be stressed, and we must emphasise that patriarchy can be changed only through concerted and well-organised struggle in the context of the ongoing political, social and economic struggles.

Economic activity in South Africa varies enormously from region to region, and within regions there are specific racial and gender patterns entrenched by state policy and capital's employment policies, which have allocated jobs in sectors of manufacturing on a racial and gender basis. For example, the Western Cape (where the food and canning industry has its centre) has a unique gender and racial division of the labour force since this industry is largely an employer of women especially, in that region, of coloured women. Throughout the hierarchy, men are placed higher on the scale than their female counterparts. There tend to be far better economic opportunities in the predominantly urban regions than in the rural and Bantustan areas. This means that, relatively speaking, in the areas in which women predominate, there are fewer economic opportunities.

In the statistics which measure economic activity, women are vastly underprofiled. Women who work in the informal sector, in subsistence agriculture, and in their own homes as housewives, are excluded. Many women who are unemployed refer to themselves — and are referred to by their husbands and the authorities — as housewives. In addition many women who assist in family businesses are not counted as employed and many domestic workers are also not counted. Figures on unemployment are therefore unreliable when it comes to women. At least five and a half million African women and 700 000 coloured women are unemployed, however, .

Women who do enter paid employment are located in certain predictable sectors, as mentioned above. The industrial working class consists of two thirds men and one third women, of whom close on 60 per cent are African women; 28 per cent are coloured women, 8 per cent are Indian women and nearly 6 per cent are white women. African women in particular tend to have menial labour jobs in industry. These women are often excluded from the grading system and hence from job protection. Often this kind of work is contracted out, so that the cleaning staff, for example, are cut off from the rest of the workforce in the industry and therefore do not benefit from union gains.

Those women who are in formal employment, experience discrimination. They often receive lower wages than men who do the same job; sometimes they are prevented from doing the same jobs as men, being allocated to less skilled and lower paid jobs. Promotion of African women in the job market over the past period has been far less than that of African men.

Women are also disadvantaged in areas such as pensions, long service bonuses, maternity benefits and the right to return to the job after childbirth. Unions have made some progress in relation to these issues, but they are still not recognised as basic workers' rights. If one looks at the problem from the perspective of the majority of South African women, progress has been for only a few women. An additional factor is that women are often employed in temporary, casual or part-time capacities which means that they are without benefits or job security.

A vast source of income for working-class women in South Africa is the informal sector, chosen out of desperation and lack of alternatives. As in other sectors, women earn less than men. It is a particularly large sector in informal and squatter communities, which, although not exclusively, tend to be African.

Interestingly, the literacy and schooling rates in South Africa do not reflect the expected pattern of lack of education for girls compared with boys. This is largely because of the appallingly low literacy and schooling levels across the country, but there are also varying statistics for urban and rural areas, and for racial categories. Although the female literacy rate is relatively high in comparison with male literacy, African women are more likely to be illiterate and to have poorer education than women from the other racial categories. And in the rural areas the expected lower illiteracy level among women is found.

Post-school educational qualifications are obviously gender-biased, reflecting a low formal skill level among South African women. Here again, there is marked racial differentiation among skilled women. African women with higher education tend to be nurses and teachers. The professional, semiprofessional and technical category of occupations in the 1985 census shows that women comprise 46,7 per cent of this category, and that nearly half of the women in this category are white. Statistics on the employment of women in the state sector are difficult to come by, but these figures will be important for the kind of affirmative action spoken of below. It will be important to know not only the numbers of women employed by the state, but also where these women are placed in the hierarchy of the state bureaucracy. The economic activity of women in South Africa is also affected by the lack of childcare facilities, and the fact that it is women who still bear the responsibility of childcare both at home and in terms of medical care, schooling, etc. Apartheid policies have meant that the state benefits that are provided create another differential among women.

For the majority of women, access to housing is largely through a relationship with a man. Until the late 1980s African women were not eligible for housing in urban areas except through their husbands. The access women have to land and housing is being changed by the 99-year leasehold, the abolition of influx control and changes in marriage law, but the housing shortage still places shelter problems on the shoulders of many women. In the rural areas forced removals, the 1913 Land Act and subsequent land law, along with customary land usage, have restricted black women's access to land in their own name. In urban areas, the Group Areas Act has prevented women of different racial groups from having access to land and homes where they would chose, and has resulted in many forced relocations.

Social and political condition of women

To these essentially economic facts should be added the cultural, religious, political differences among South African women. The life of an English-speaking, Anglican woman cannot easily be equated with that of a Gujurati-speaking Hindu woman, no matter how similar their sources of income may be. Patriarchy is also culturally specific. These factors should not be underestimated in the process of addressing the task of nation-building. It is on account of the lack of space that they are mentioned only in passing in this chapter.

The process of mobilisation for war by the steady infiltration of the military into most sectors of the state and even into civil society during the 1980s had specific effects on the women of South Africa. Militarisation, the gradual rise to primacy of the military within the state and society, has been the systematic extension of the patriarchal institution of the defence force into a position of power over the citizenry and over the society as a whole. (See Cock 1987.)

The 'Total Strategy' articulated by state structures and ideologues since the mid-1970s has been aimed at strengthening the armed forces and at imposing on citizens and the people, the military's ideological understanding of the South African reality. It has also entailed financial commitments to enormous defence expenditure as well as the growth of the arms industry. The links between the defence force and the private sector occurred through the 'key points plan', by which, at the stroke of a pen, private companies could be turned into production sites for the needs of the armed forces. The 'Hearts and Minds' component of Total Strategy had a particular effect on women, who were identified as a specific target group. Attempts to reach women through the SADF taking young school children on veld trips without parental permission were exposed and fought against by many black women and their organisations in the mid-1980s.

The militarisation of South African society polarised women by, directly and indirectly, including white women in the ambit of the defence force. By the late 1980s white women comprised approximately 5,5 per cent of the Permanent Force. Within the Permanent Force, the gender division of labour was very clear and did not cut across traditional attitudes to gender roles.

By contrast, black women's experience has tended to be on the receiving end of the Hearts and Minds campaign and at the gun point of the defence force might. Black women have also experienced militarisation through the involvement of men, women and youth in the liberation war. This entailed direct combat roles, courier work, accommodation of guerrilla fighters, and the more traditional experiences as mothers, wives, friends and lovers of soldiers, male and female, at war. In addition, Jackie Cock has argued that the global involvement of women in the military-industrial complex has also been prevalent in South Africa. The involvement of the electronics industry in military production brings with it a vast female labour force.

Implications for the development of a gender consciousness

These facts about the position of women in South Africa give a sketch of many divisions that make the notion of 'sisterhood' an artificial concept in South Africa. The most fundamental division is that of class, which places middle-class women and working-class, predominantly black women, on opposite sides of the fence. Balancing precariously on the fence in a context of changing colour relations and hence class relations is a growing black middle-class with a sizeable component of women.

Despite these lines of division, in the present negotiations period, women across the ideological spectrum have been able to unite, as women, around some basic human rights. This unity, which is not without contradictions, has been seen in the Gender Advisory Committee at Codesa (the Council for a Democratic South Africa), in the Women's National Coalition and in the Women's Charter Campaign. There is a gender consciousness emerging within the context of political positions, but this gender consciousness has a variety of ideological bases. It is crucial to recognise that gender consciousness cannot be freed from other aspects of political understanding. The implications of this for building a gender-sensitive nation are significant, because it is not always possible to rally women behind a gender issue, since their approaches to the issue may be informed by different and conflicting overall policies and perspectives.

The Tripartite Alliance of the ANC, SACP and Cosatu (the Congress of South Africa Trade Unions) has an emerging women's or gender alliance, which is faced with the crucial task of becoming the backbone of a mass-based, working class-biased, women's movement, which will need to incorporate independent women's organisations in all aspects of civil society. The lobbies within political parties, as has been seen in the recent Multi-Party Forum meetings, are not sufficient to win the struggle for recognition of the human rights of women. As I argued elsewhere (Schreiner 1991), women have a crucial role to play through organisation in civil society to deepen the democratisation process.

The task of nation-building has to consider the existing sites of organisation within the political scene, the economic arena and in civil society. The Manyanos, stokvels, Vrouefederasies, knitting circles and bridge clubs all contribute to the social definition of women's lives, and hence need to be part of the process of redefining the meaning of being a woman in a democratised South Africa.

CHALLENGING PATRIARCHY

The giant question to be tackled, which no country has as yet come near to addressing, is how to build a non-sexist nation. Across the board, capitalist or socialist, religious or secular, no state has removed the basis of patriarchy[5] from its social fabric. Within these different types of social formation however, there are very different experiences of gender inequality and patriarchy. Enormous strides have been made in the freedom of women in socialist countries, although many of the components of patriarchy have remained unchallenged. It is important that we should not fall into the trap of compressing the experiences of all socialist countries into one. The paths chosen in the socialist world have not been uniform. The errors of socialism in Eastern Europe and its collapse do not mean that the same practices have applied in other socialist countries. The experiences of the gender struggle in countries such as Cuba, Mozambique and Nicaragua, have important examples for us to draw on, and significant lessons of the difficulty in this area of social transformation.

Building a gender-liberated nation is not a victory which we in South Africa are on the verge of winning; but it is true to say that if the struggle for women's participation and gender equality in nation-building and the emancipation of women is left for a later date, then by this time next century we will still have to admit that there is no country that can claim a victory.

Gender relations are fundamental to any society — the issue is how unequal are these relations, and how do they intersect with other power relations in society? This conceptualisation of the relationship between men and women as a social phenomenon (rather than a natural given) is necessary for correct theorisation of nation-building and for the practice of democratisation of South African society. South Africans are divided from each other on the grounds of race, class and gender, resulting in a multitextured patchwork of communities.

When we refer to 'inter-communal reconciliation' in South Africa it is clearly a task cutting across many lines of fracture. Some of these lines, such as class divisions, are fundamental power relations which, for the foreseeable future, will continue to stratify our society. Others are less antagonistic divisions, which can more easily be accommodated in a non-oppressive way.

When we turn to consider the manner in which patriarchy affects, and is affected by, the other lines of division in our land, we discover that while patriarchy is one of the most widespread forms of inequality, it is not the most obvious one to members of communities. Within a group or community, people see themselves united as men and women of that community (or class or grouping) before they see themselves pitted against each other in unequal gender relations.[6]

Ideological, political and cultural factors play a particular role in the way in which communities define themselves. Nation-building has to take into account the myriad of ways in which the people of a country see themselves and try to find national symbols and a national identity that welds those perceptions into a whole. Patriarchy is at the same time an ideological, cultural, political and economic construct, but with cultural and ideological factors having some predominance. The question facing us is: will patriarchy become a component of the national identity and national symbols, or can we find a national identity that moves away from this form of oppression?

Citizenship and the symbolic national liberation of women

National symbols, nationalist pride and national duties are part of the process of nation-building. They are mechanisms for sustaining unity across class, cultural and other divides. In relation to gender therefore, it is not a question of how to build a nation that denies the existence of gender, but how to build a nation in which gender differences are a source of progress and development, not a source of oppression and inequality.

One of the key national symbols of the South African oppressor nation has been the 'Boys on the Border'. National service is central to nationhood, being a responsibility of citizens. In white South Africa, it took the form of conscription into the army for white men, and support for the boys in brown by white women. This sexist approach to defence portrayed the duty of citizenship as solely the preserve and privilege of white men.

This attitude needs to be challenged on two grounds — first to question whether it is a privilege to be conscripted into any army unless one's nation is at war with another nation; and second the manner in which it degraded white women's citizenship and that of other South Africans.

The integration of the various armed forces of the apartheid era — both those of South Africa and the 'independent' homelands — and those of the liberation movements, therefore faces the additional challenge of creating defence and security forces that are not only politically neutral, accountable to civilian rule and racially non-discriminatory in membership and practice, but also open to gender equality.

Some form of national service (and I do not imply that it should be conscription into the armed forces) should be part of the duty of citizenship of every South African, man or woman. There should be a range of forms of national service from which individuals can select the way in which they wish to serve their country. The task will be to create national symbols and national services that are inclusive of women in a positive way and as active citizens. The direction in which the nation should be looking is that of national service that addresses reconstruction and security/ stability, instead of seeing national service simply as enforced time in the armed forces. As elaborated on later, this could take the form of brigades of volunteers in stints of community service. A gender-sensitive approach to nation-building must take on the job of reconstructing the social definition of men and women. The Mozambican and Cuban experiences illustrate what I mean here. Both of these countries put forward an image of a New Woman and a New Man, and key to these images was the different manner in which the interaction between men and women was portrayed. In Mozambique there was a cartoon character called Xiconocha, who behaved in an exceptionally traditional and patriarchal way, and received countless lessons from the pictorial images of women of his community and from the women of Frelimo about more progressive, democratic and liberated ways to behave.

The El Salvadorean experience of a 'negotiated revolution' illustrates how even in a period of negotiations, the vision of a free society with revolutionary transformation is not idle dreaming. Within their negotiated revolution, the El Salvadoreans still struggle for the renegotiation of interpersonal relations between men and women, a crucial component of the struggle against patriarchy and for the building of a non-sexist nation.

Most of the writing on gender and the present negotiation period of South African history is restricted to constitutional and legal matters and governmental structures. There is an inherent danger in this. Laws and constitutions are documents that have to be put into practice. They do not of themselves challenge unequal power relations or existing material and social conditions. The failure of other countries to fully redress the oppression of women through legislation is a sobering lesson for us. Merely to allocate equal rights in law, without dealing with the very real differences in the conditions under which women live, work, play and struggle under is to pay lip service to emancipation.[7] Where unequal power relations exist in society to seek a solution without being prepared to swing the pendulum in the opposite direction is to protect the *status quo*.

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

Affirmative action, or empowerment of women, cannot be approached merely as a mechanism to secure women's participation, but should be approached as a transitional political strategy to build equal participation by women, in terms of the space and skills to do so, within all spheres of society. Affirmative action strategies have to take account of the divisions and differences among women. As an organised challenge to unequal relations of power, the implementation of affirmative action mechanisms has to be based on understanding the complexity of the lives and experiences of South African women.

Affirmative action must not become the mechanistic deployment of women into positions in institutions. Without the development of a political consciousness that identifies oppressive gender relations as a site of struggle, affirmative action degenerates into tokenism and may be profoundly disempowering. The process of developing women is the most crucial part of affirmative action. It is also vital that affirmative action be guided by a Bill of Rights, since the process of positive discrimination involves a challenge to existing seats of power, and involves changing the accepted rights of men in terms of culture, politics, economics, etc. Constitutional backing to affirmative action programmes is necessary, particularly in the context of a democratic constitution which outlaws discriminatory practices (see SACP 1993).

Negotiations, state-building and new political institutions

Alongside the building of a nation lies the task of setting up a democratic state. Despite its democratic nature, this state will, still be a site of struggle between various class interests, in which the state machinery protects and serves the interests of the ruling class and its allies while portraying itself as the state of all citizens.

Restructuring and transforming the state will entail building non-racial and non-sexist government machinery at both legislative and executive levels, as well as the state services of the police, defence force, intelligence service, prisons and law courts. For the state to be non-sexist, not only must the policy framework be premised on the recognition of the human rights of women, but the staffing of the institutions and the implementation of the policy must also reflect affirmative action towards women and the allocation of resources to redress gender imbalances.

Various countries have tried particular mechanisms, or combinations of them, to implement affirmative action. These are worth listing briefly, although any detailed discussion of them is impossible in this chapter because of length. (There is a fuller discussion of them in SACP 1933.)

Briefly, countries and organisations have used the following mechanisms:

- A system of a quota of either elected positions or nominees of for elected positions. The criticism of the first option is that it imposes a qualified democracy in that voters are forced to vote for a certain percentage of women, even if they do not believe they are the most suitable candidates. This approach raises the awareness of gender in an election or staffing procedure, while it also leaves the voters free to exercise unfettered democracy in their voting;
- the target system, which is a politically rather than constitutionally defined process, in which organisations and structures set targets for recruitment, development and finally election of women into their structures and positions;
- mandated representation is a system whereby a women's section of any body has representatives on the structures of the controlling or 'mother-body' (sic!). This option may tend to ghettoise women into a subordinate structure, the women's wing, or to impose on women another organisational responsibility.

The task of embarking on affirmative action for women is vast, and gains are more likely to be made through an empowerment package combining different mechanisms of affirmative action. These mechanisms, however, are only a part of the process of empowerment of women, and more is needed than the setting in place of women's structures or mechanisms.

Living under capitalist relations, there are many obstacles that preclude women's participation on an equal footing with menfolk. A distinction has been made between strategic gender issues and practical gender issues, strategic gender issues being those issues such as legal discrimination, political representation, etc.; practical gender issues being the obstacles that make women's equal participation more difficult, such as the double day of paid labour and household responsibilities, and lack of childcare. This distinction degrades the practical needs of women, and obscures the crucial link between the broader political and legal rights of women and the conditions under which women live and struggle.

Women's lives are different from men's lives in many ways, and differ from nation to nation, depending on the social relations, political system and cultures within each society:

- Socially. Boys and girls are brought up to think, act and respond differently.
- Culturally. Society expects us to behave differently and where women behave in the same way as men do, they experience severe societal condemnation.
- Religiously. In most religions women are restricted in certain ways and religious ideologies often reinforce the oppression of women.
- Economically. Women and men have different jobs, receive different wages and women are often in less organised sectors of industry.
- Politically. Women have unequal positions in organisation and political life.

- Traditionally. Custom dictates that women have to play a particular role, often in subordination to men.
- Within the family. Husbands' attitudes are often oppressive to their wives. The notion within family ideology and the law of the man as the head of the household is often not in keeping with the reality of the South African household structures.

In addition, women face the practical problems of childcare, housework, fears of rape and assault, lack of education and skills, and attitudes to women's involvement outside the home, or outside the private and welfare spheres.

Affirmative action has to be embarked on in all aspects of cementing the nation and the state structures. This includes training and deploying women in the civil service, government departments of the executive, and in state services such as the police force, the prison system, the defence force, intelligence structures and the court system. Each department requires a gender desk to monitor departmental policy and programmes for gender-sensitivity and to monitor affirmative action within these policies and programmes. This approach differs from that of establishing a Women's Ministry. The option of a Women's Ministry, unless complemented by the inclusion of women in every apparatus of the state, can ghettoise gender issues to an underresourced, understaffed and undervalued structure. What is needed is a package including elements such as a Women's Ministry, gender desks in all government departments, a state-financed but non-governmental Gender Commission for monitoring gender issues, as well as Parliamentary structures and procedures such as a Parliamentary Gender Committee with veto powers over all legislation, and/or a Parliamentary Women's Caucus.

More complex is the process of ensuring that women are put forward as candidates for election and take their place within the legislature of the country. The issue here is how to embark on affirmative action without undermining the very process of democracy itself.

The task of nation-building is also affected by the nature of the constitutional system that the country adopts. A federal system with weak central government can make the task of unifying a nation that much harder, while an overly centralised state can result in groupings within society feeling oppressed.

Another factor relevant to the ease of nation-building is the degree of participatory democracy. Where government is based purely on representatives being elected every five years and implementation of policy being entirely through the civil service, there is less likelihood that women's voices will be raised clearly, given the lack of real affirmative action and the practical obstacles to women's participation. The more participatory the democracy, the greater the room for citizens to participate in discussion and implementation without necessarily having been elected to national office, or being skilled enough for employment in the civil service. While this increases the space for women, and particularly for working-class women, it should not take the place of the nation and state addressing and overcoming the factors that keep women out of full and equal participation in national, political, economic and security service structures.

Affirmative action has been defined as a process of empowerment and development. Changes to the legal system to outlaw sexist discrimination and to protect the human rights of women are a part of such empowerment, and complement the mechanisms to ensure deployment of women in all areas of society. Formal legal emancipation is only one component of building a gender-equal nation, however. Social emancipation and a fundamental national democratic transformation process are vital to this process. The concrete hardships that entrap women make the process of challenging patriarchal values and practices by women an almost insurmountable obstacle.

RECONSTRUCTION AND NATION-BUILDING BURYING APARTHEID AND LAYING THE BASIS FOR TRANSFORMATION

The building of our nation must overcome the legacy of apartheid. And the building of a non-sexist nation must address the hardships apartheid has imposed on the majority of women in this country. The more fundamental this process, the more coherent and stable the nation that will be formed. Nationhood does not imply uniformity and lack of difference. But nationhood also should not rest on inequality and discrimination; nor should it imply a static and unchanging nation. South Africa is faced with removing the legacy of apartheid inequality while at the same time allowing for freedom of choice and expression except where this is oppressive of other South Africans. This approach to nation-building and reconstruction is necessary for ongoing deepening of democracy and more just and equitable distribution of resources and powers.

Given the imperative of this move away from the legacy of apartheid's social evils, the issue of reconstruction becomes integral to nation-building. The current levels of social disparities in terms of access to facilities, wages and economic potential, education provision (to name but a few) will continue to militate against the building of a nation which is inclusive of all South Africans.

Reconstruction is the planned and extensive restructuring of society socio-economically, and at the level of the state, in order to ensure that the new democracy effectively addresses the needs of the majority of South Africans. However, it should be noted that the concept of reconstruction is an ideologically contested one on which capital, the apartheid regime and the liberation movement do not agree. The process of embarking on a programme of reconstruction involves a struggle over the definition and content of such a programme. It is crucial that the period of reconstruction is seen for what it is — a period of changing class relations and and an intensification of class struggle within the process of building the nation-state. There is a contradictory tension between unifying a nation and embarking on thoroughgoing reconstruction in the interests of the majority of South Africans. The reconstruction programme is a class-contested arena of struggle.

Towards a programme of reconstruction — accords, brigades and struggle

For a reconstruction programme to address the needs of the majority of South Africans, those who bore the brunt of apartheid's brutality, it must be based on agreement between the democratic government and the major progressive players in civil society. The proposal of a reconstruction accord between the ANC and Cosatu is a necessary starting point for this process. Because a programme of reconstruction is based on conflicting class interests, it is not possible to unite all the forces into a reconstruction pact. Capital and its allies remain pitted against the working-class-led reconstruction programme.

A reconstruction programme must aim at the blocking of unilateral restructuring of society. It should unlock resources to meet the needs of the majority of South Africans. It must involve democratic economic decision-making and, vitally important, has to include an educational component to equip people to participate in decision-making and implementation in an informed manner. The campaign being waged by the Tripartite Alliance against corruption and wastage by the government and civil service constitutes an important part of unlocking resources for the service of the people of South Africa.

The massive resources that are being ploughed into voter-education programmes should not stop at teaching about the procedure on voting day, and what the vote is, but should also address the question of nation-building and the task of reconstruction. The voter-education process needs to develop a gender sensitive approach-making sure that steps are taken to reach women specifically and to overcome the obstacles to women's participation. Voter education is not only part of preparation for reconstructing our society, but also a crucial part of the developmental aspect of affirmative action.

The exclusion of the majority of South Africans from the civil service, the security forces and the representative political institutions of government, and the relegation of black civil servants, security forces and representatives to second-class status or balkanised structures such as the homelands, Houses of Delegates and

Representatives, means that reconstruction also entails the restructuring and transforming of state structures, political institutions and the state security forces.

Reconstruction therefore covers state, economic, social, political, and security areas. Peace and stability, which go hand in glove with the concept of 'a nation', are not possible if a democratic government and reconstruction are not achieved. The reconstruction programme must be closely linked into the local peace structures and the programme of creating a free and peaceful political climate. Reconciliation is a by-product of a process of nation-building based on reconstruction not its forerunner.

The reconstruction process must be one that empowers the majority of South Africans, and this can be done only through active participation in shaping and executing this programme by the people of South Africa. Comrade Chris Hani, speaking to a recent Peace Summit (Hani 1993), proposed the

> building of a broad Peace Corps within our townships and places of work. Our conception of SDUs (self-defence units) must not be simply short-term and ad hoc. Should we not have township based, non-partisan SDUs (or Committees for the Defence of the Revolution — CDRs — as they are called in Cuba) funded and trained by a future democratic state? I am thinking of paid or voluntary civic service, let us say 500 people for (and from) a township like Sebokeng doing a two year stint assisting with crime control, patrolling, clean-up campaigns and general service to their township.

The approach which he outlined here is applicable not only to a Peace Corps. Housing and literacy brigades could play an important role in addressing the adult education and housing crises.

Civil society, mass organisation and gender

Nation-building and reconstruction do not stop at governmental and state structures. The creation of a vibrant civil society is a core component of this process. It has been argued elsewhere (Schreiner 1991) that mass-based women's organisations have a key role to play in the transition to democracy, in building civil society and in the transfer of power to the people. Equally valid is the argument that civil society has a key role to play in the gradual process of the development and emancipation of women. This does not imply that women's issues are merely located in civil society. The artificial dichotomy of locating women in the private sphere and excluding women from the public sphere cannot be reproduced in a non-sexist nation.

Currently, because of the unequal gender relations that exist in South Africa and because of the exclusion of the majority of the population from the South African polity, the majority of women have a more powerful voice in civil society, in the community, social, church, cultural and familial institutions of society than they do in the constitutional political structures. But that is not to suggest that women have a more powerful voice in civil society than men. The forthcoming democratic constitution will no doubt go some way towards changing the relative exclusion of women from constitutional dispensations. A constitution is a written document, however, and even if it is based on the will of the people, it is still a far cry from the realisation of the visionary principles it enshrines into the fabric of society.

The inherent dangers of a programme of reconstruction can be avoided only by the mass organisations playing a central role in reconstruction. Nation-building without mass-based organisation at grassroots level is building a nation-state with power in the hands of the elite, rather than a process of building a powerful social entity.

CONCLUSION — IS A NON-PATRIARCHAL NATION POSSIBLE?

I have begun to explore the way in which the process of building a non-patriachal nation can be embarked on in South Africa in the present context. In so doing, I identified three components of this process, since it is impossible to dwell on all aspects of the process of nation-building — this task has been covered by an entire book — to do so in a gender-sensitive manner would result in another book at least.

A reconstruction programme, as opposed to a pact, is fundamental to national democratic revolution and the transfer of power to the people. I have argued that reconstruction is the basis for nation-building and intercommunal reconciliation. If this is so, then a gender-sensitive reconstruction programme that specifically addresses the economic, social, political and cultural disadvantages of the vast majority of South African women is necessary for the process of building a non-sexist nation.

Both the process of affirmative action — deployment and election of women as well as development of women's capabilities and the removal of obstacles to women's involvement — and the struggle against the patriachal legacy of the apartheid era have to be welded in the reconstruction programme. In this way, the reconstruction programme will also become far more than a programme aimed at restructuring the economy and the state. It will be a programme of building organisation, challenging cultural attitudes, and practising a new form of politics. Reconciliation and nation-building entail the recognition of the evils of the past and the taking of responsibility for them by the perpetrators. Reconstruction, nation-building and stability will be impossible unless we move forward without the baggage of past oppression, repression and brutality.

NOTES

1. National democratic revolution involves fundamental social change in which the colonial/apartheid state is radically restructured; a united and democratic South Africa is established which is both non-racial and non-sexist; a process of addressing the socioeconomic needs of the majority of South Africans is undertaken; and participatory organs of government from local to national level are built. The main aims of the national democratic revolution are outlined in the Freedom Charter. The realisation of the objectives stated in the Freedom Charter constitutes the foundation to the solution of the national question, a basic task of the national democratic revolution and of nation formation.

2. 'Gender' is a relational concept, referring to the socially constructed relations between men and women, as opposed to 'sex' which is a biological distinction between men and women. Current analysis and organisations aim through gender-sensitive approaches at achieving non-oppressive and non-exploitative gender relations. Gender relations are integral to social organisation, but the way in which power is distributed across the gender divide and the nature of gender inequality vary from society to society. The key component of gender relations is the gender division of labour, which which does not simply determine the tasks women do, but also influences the process of ascribing social value to the tasks, of acquiring the skills and aptitudes to undertake these tasks and the distribution of the resources that are produced by this gender division of labour.

3. Maxine Molyneux wrote a seminal in *Critique of anthropology* in the mid-1970s in which she showed how the inclusion of a gender perspective, namely examining the position of women and their relations to men and to power within a community, could turn existing analyses on their head. Through conducting gender-sensitive research, she factually challenged the conclusions of leading anthropologists about class and power structures within that community, and put forward an alternative analysis of the community based on a wider data base.

4. Budlender 1991; Schreiner 1989; Ginwala, *et al.* 1990; Maconachie 1989.

5. Patriarchy is a term that refers not only to male/female power relations, but also to power relations that are determined more by political and ideological factors than by economic or class relations. In much of the feminist writing the term is used without definition and rather descriptively.
   In this chapter it is used to refer to those aspects of the subordination of women which are not directly rooted in the economic and class relations. It is chosen to emphasise the fact that even when the economic and political position of women is altered, there remains a cultural lag, to use Lenin's terminology, which as yet no country has overcome. Patriarchy tends to remain even when socialist forms of economy and political system are introduced.

6. Alexander Kollontai wrote on the social basis of women's oppression and from this moved to discuss whether there was a basis for a cross-class women's movement. She

argued that working-class women will more easily identify with a struggle alongside their working-class menfolk than side with bourgeois women against men.

7. Emancipation is used here to mean the freeing of women from the social relations that are oppressive and exploitative, and not just the legal emancipation, removal of legal discrimination against women. As such it also means release of men from the constraints of societally defined roles, as well as a challenge to their dominance in power relations *vis-á-vis* men. Women's emancipation is not achieved through a list of women's issues; it entails redesigning relations in the personal, political, economic, social, cultural and ideological spheres and providing the resources to facilitate the democratisation of these areas. This transformation does not come through the stroke of a pen, or through a policy statement. Women's emancipation is an ongoing part of the democratisation of society, a process which entails moving away from oppressive relations and structures and allowing people to determine how they wish to live and work, and the space in which to realise their full human potential.

REFERENCES

BUDLENDER, Debbie. 1991. *Women and the economy.* Paper presented at the Women and Gender in Southern Africa Conference, University of Natal Durban, February.

COCK, Jackie. 1987. *Keeping the fires burning: militarisation and the politics of gender in South Africa.* Paper presented at a Wits African Studies Institute Seminar, October.

GINWALA, F.; MacKINTOSH, M. & MASSEY, D. *et al.* 1990. *Gender and economic policy in a democratic South Africa.* (Discussion paper.)

HANI, Chris. 1993. Speech to East Rand Peace Summit, 2 April.

MACONACHIE, M. 1989. Looking for patterns of women's employment and educational achievements in the 1985 census. *Agenda* 5.

MOLAPO, F. n.d. Quoted in extracts from a panel discussion in a symposium: *Democracy: a vision for the future.*

SACP. 1993. *Empowering women in the party: can affirmative action win women equal participation?* (Discussion paper.)

SCHREINER, J. A. 1989. *Colonialism of a special type, gender, state and the constitution — a theoretical investigation.* Unpublished paper written in Pollsmoor Prison.

SCHREINER, J. A. 1991. Transferring power to the people and the emancipation of women — how should we organise women in the 1990s? *African communist,* 126, Third Quarter.

CHAPTER 31

Women, civil society and citizenship: a reaction to Schreiner

Amanda Gouws

Jenny Schreiner (see Chapter 30) exposes the limits that patriarchy puts on the involvement of women in the process of nation-building and highlights the difficulties in developing a non-sexist society. Yet, neither her vision of the nature of the state, nor her analysis of citizenship is comprehensive enough to inform our understanding of women's inclusion in civil society. Her conceptualisation of citizenship remains on the level of the creation of symbols and new identities to unite people in a new nation. She fails to discuss how existing identities will constitute or obstruct nation-building, however. Her discussion of the state and civil society is brief and without mention of how the dynamic relationship between the state and civil society will determine women's inclusion in civil society.

The conceptions of civil society and citizenship and their significance for women need further development within the context of the existing debate about civil society in South Africa.

WOMEN AND CIVIL SOCIETY

Women have traditionally been excluded from citizenship because of the distinction between the public (political) and the private (domestic) sphere. While this distinction carries the assumption that it affects all people in the same way, it obscures women's exclusion from the public sphere. Civil society and its accompanying construction of citizenship, is conceptualised in abstraction from, or as separate from, the private domestic sphere (Pateman 1989:120-121). As Pateman (1989:122) makes clear, the apparently universal criteria governing civil society are actually those associated with the liberal conception of the male individual. Civil society is structured by gender, race and class relations which affect men and women differently because of their different relations to the private sphere.

While the inclusion of women in civil society will establish new notions of citizenship for women, it is an ongoing process that should be viewed against the historical development of the state. Civil society cannot be discussed in isolation from its dynamic relationship with the state. In the South African context some scholars argue that civil society should be independent from the state in a watchdog role (see Swilling 1992). Others argue for a strong state that would protect civil society (see Stadler 1992), while some argue for the collapse of civil society and the state (see Nzimande & Sikhosana 1992). They are all silent on the conditions of women within civil society and the state, however.

Women are not a homogeneous group. Under a patriarchy they are oppressed in different ways depending on their racial and/or class status. The different forms their oppression takes are related to the intersection between these categories and the way it is expressed by practices and policies of the state.

Women, as gendered beings, are organised hierarchically by the state and practices of the state vary across policy and institutions (Manicom 1992:464). As Manicom (1992:458) argues, we are not only faced with what the state did to women but also with how and why different social concerns were taken up in policy in the form of a particular gender construction (such as wives, mothers, domestic servants, etc.) through which gender difference and subordination are regulated in a specific way. Analyses of the history of gender construction by the state have revealed that state policies refer to women in a variety of ways, for example mother, wife, black and worker, infusing those constructs with racial, sexual and class ideologies but also constructing women as objects of rule, creating, restructuring and reproducing social and political identities at the same time (Manicom 1992:456). When women mobilise around certain social concerns created by a specific gender construction, regulated in a specific way by the state, their participation in civil society will reflect this.

We will have to go beyond merely arguing that strong women's organisations will form part of a strong civil society. What matters is how women are incorporated into civil society and how they are situated in relation to the state. Are they incorporated in the constructed identities of mothers, wives, workers, daughters, etc.? We cannot assume gender neutrality in the incorporation process. Women's groups are not incorporated in a gender neutral fashion because women are incorporated *as women.*

The debate about the reconstruction of civil society in South Africa draws on liberal and socialist conceptions of citizenship and the state. What form a reconstructed state in South Africa will take will have serious implications for women's citizenship.

Both the liberal and the socialist state have failed to make women equal citizens.

WOMEN, CITIZENSHIP AND THE LIBERAL STATE

Under the liberal state, citizenship is viewed as the individual's exercise of rights and public equality and civil society as the sphere in which rights and liberties are exercised. The individual is an atomistic, rational agent who is the bearer of formal rights and civil liberties. According to liberal theory the state acts merely in a regulatory capacity and allows its citizens to be equal competitors, while society ensures the freedom of all its members to realise their capacities.

Central to liberal thought is human equality, where egalitarianism takes the form of negative liberty — freedom becomes the space in which the individual can act unobstructed by others. As a competitor the individual gets an equal opportunity to enter the economic market place (Dietz 1992:64-67). Dietz (1992:67) sums up the conception of citizenship under liberalism as 'something like equal membership in an economic and social sphere, more or less regulated by government and more or less dedicated to the assumption that the "market maketh man"[sic]'. Citizenship therefore is less of a collective, political activity than an individual economic activity to pursue interests unobstructed in the market place.

Yet, according to liberal thought individuals are members of a private sphere in which any intrusion needs to be justified. The rights of the individual determine the limits of government interference in the private sphere (Atkinson 1992:12). The focus on the abstract, ungendered, universal individual and the distinction between the public and the private sphere have greatly contributed to women's political subordination because women are to the greatest extent the inhabitants of the private sphere. Domestic inequality is contrary to equal citizenship (Phillips 1991:157).

The rectification of the unequal treatment of women by the liberal state is witnessed in attempts to extend citizenship through positive political programmes such as pregnancy leave, childcare facilities, equal pay for work of equal value, sexual harassment laws, health care benefits and affirmative action (Dietz 1992:68). Liberal practices, however, do not challenge the divide between the public and the private sphere, nor do they challenge patriarchy.

Under the liberal state women are incorporated into civil society through the extension of rights and practices that situate them in relation to the state as individuals, yet do not challenge their class or racial status seriously enough, but leave it up to the individual to challenge her own class and racial status.

WOMEN, CITIZENSHIP AND THE SOCIALIST STATE

Under earlier formulations of Marxism, civil society and the state were viewed as epiphenomena that were less important than the economic structure which produced them. According to this view the exploitation and domination of the economic sphere would be reproduced in the state and civil society. One of the aims of the capitalist state was to defend and reproduce the capitalist mode of production at the level of civil society through the subordination of the political and ideological struggle to economic forces (Atkinson 1992:13). Under capitalism, class exploitation and conflict became embedded in civil society which was inherently without liberty, equality and fraternity.

Following from the Marxist belief of generating a classless society through class conflict and achieving the withering away of the state, reform of the state and civil society is insufficient as human exploitation would only end through transformation of economic forces from which all human relations originate (Atkinson 1992:14).

For Marx the emergence of civil society would benefit bourgeois rule. As Nina (1992:63) states, 'civil society, arising out of the needs of the bourgeois state, constitutes the ideal terrain for the consolidation of capitalism, whilst the state will guard it from any attempt to disrupt that process'. The distinction between state and civil society, therefore, does not contribute to changing economic relations but bolsters capitalism.

Structural Marxists such as Althusser and Poulantzas found the notion of civil society problematic to structural analysis and collapsed the distinction between the state and civil society into concepts of the ideological state apparatus such as the schools, media and churches which were to reproduce the capitalist mode of production (Atkinson 1992:14).

For Gramsci, however, the hegemony of the ruling class is developed and maintained through the institutions of civil society in the form of consent or through coercion by the state. The hegemony of the ruling class is developed and maintained through the institutions of civil society (Riddiough 1981:78, Nina 1992:64). Gramsci saw the relationships between the mode of production, the state and civil society as complex, changing, and reciprocal. He felt that cultural, political, and ideological forces could shape the nature and outcome of political struggle, especially if they could interfere with ruling class hegemony.

Nzimande and Sikhosana (1992:46-48), therefore, argue that the relationship between the state and civil society is not a dichotomous one but should be viewed as dialectical. For them the separation of state and civil society under capitalism obscures the need for the creation of state organs of power which act simultaneously as organs of state power and autonomous mass social formations acting independently of the state.

As Marxists are interested in the proletariat they dismiss citizenship as bourgeois conceit. True citizenship occurs with the collective ownership of the means of production and through the eradication of oppression in the relations of production (Dietz 1992:70).

Feminists' critique of Marxism stems from the oppression inherent in the sexual division of labour under capitalist patriarchy. Labour relations within the family also need to be analysed as oppressive. Women's reproduction of the labour force and women's creation of use values are not included in analyses of oppressive relationships.

Marxist analyses tend to subsume the struggle against sexism in the struggle against capitalism and concentrate on women's relationship to the economic system rather than the relationship of women to men. Women's oppression is viewed in relation to production where women are seen merely as part of the working class and their oppression is analysed in terms of their relationship as workers to capital. According to Marxist analyses, when women are drawn into wage labour, erosion of the sexual division of labour will occur and women will be emancipated through their participation in the labour force (Hartmann 1981:4).

Early Marxists fail to take into account the differences between men and women's experiences of capitalism and *patriarchy*. Capitalism and private property cause the oppression of women as workers but patriarchy causes women's oppression as *women*. Women's liberation will not be achieved as a consequence of the eradication of the capitalist state (Hartmann 1981:5). Marxists fail to incorporate the material base of patriarchy, which is men's control over women's labour power, into their analyses (Hartmann 1981:18).

The socialist state therefore attempts to eradicate women's class status but leave their gender and racial status intact. Women are situated in relation to the state as members of a sex-class and not as gender-neutral workers.

WOMEN, CITIZENSHIP AND RADICAL DEMOCRACY

The post-modern project of radical democracy attempts to create a new conception of citizenship that would take into account all the constructed identities of women and would not single out some at the expense of others. Radical democracy takes into account the criticisms made by feminists against notions of citizenship that exclude women (Mouffe 1992:9). Citizenship is the transcendence of the individualist notion of liberalism through the insertion of the individual into political community (Mouffe 1992:4).

Radical democracy attempts to reconcile pluralism with the positive aspects of liberal-democracy without accepting the negative aspects of liberal individualism. As Mouffe (1992:10) expresses this conception of pluralism: '[T]his requires abandoning the reductionism and essentialism dominant in the liberal interpretations of pluralism, and acknowledging the contingency and ambiguity of every identity, as well as the constitutive character of social division and antagonism.'

Notions of the 'common good' 'civic virtue' and 'political community' must be reformulated to make them compatible with the recognition of conflict, division and antagonism and contestation. Citizenship is participation in a collective undertaking that is incompatible with the individualistic framework of liberalism. This type of citizenship is a response to the liberal conception that reduces citizenship to a legal status and statist conception of the left (Mouffe 1992:5).

In this view, the state cannot be neutral, but should enhance the idea of complex equality where different social goods should be distributed in accordance with a variety of criteria reflecting the diversity of those goods and their social meanings (Mouffe 1992:7). It is an attempt to reconcile equality and liberty, and rights with the common good or general welfare.

It requires a radical interpretation of liberty and equality in a way that takes into account the different social relations and subject positions in which they are relevant: gender, class, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation. As Mouffe (1992:236) states:

> The creation of political identities as radical democratic citizens depends therefore on a collective form of identification among the democratic demands found in a variety of movements: women, workers, black gay, ecological, as well as in several other 'new social movements'. This is a conception of citizenship which, through a common identification with a radical democratic interpretation of the principles of liberty and equality, aims at constructing a 'we', a chain of equivalence among their demands so as to articulate them through the principle of democratic equivalence. For it is not a matter of establishing a mere alliance between given interests but of actually modifying the very identity of these forces.

The radical democratic notion of citizenship challenges the divide between the public and the private, and allows for the constitution of numerous identities that are forged through contestation in both the civil society and the state. Yet, this type of citizenship implies that difference (*viz.* gender difference) becomes truly irrelevant. As Mouffe (1992:10) states: '[W]ithin the perspective of a project of radical and plural democracy such a "non-gendered" conception of citizenship is more promising because it allows for the articulation of many democratic demands and does not focus solely on the exclusion of women.' For feminists who are concerned with the exclusion from citizenship of women *as women* the radical democratic conception of citizenship may undermine their very reason for the analysis of citizenship for women.

The state in South Africa has been neither liberal nor socialist but rather repressive, excluding blacks from citizenship altogether. Conceptions of citizenship for women in South Africa will have to be analysed in all the complexity of racial in/exclusion, nationalist constructions of identities of mother, wife and daughter, etc., and the conservative implications of ethnic self-determination and its power to divide women. How women create their own identities in civil society by challenging the state becomes central to any analysis of citizenship.

INCLUDING WOMEN IN CIVIL SOCIETY THROUGH POLITICAL REPRESENTATION

I am now going to shift from a theoretical argument to an evaluation of empirical evidence regarding women's political representation. While this may strike the reader as strange, this discussion is important to address Schreiner's argument about the nature of the constitutional system. This is also a shift from civil society to political society. Formal representation in government, however, may form a vital link for women between civil society and the state.

Although Schreiner points out the danger of having a weak and overly centralised government in the process of nation-building, she does not discuss the types of electoral systems or the systems of representation that would benefit women. Contrary to her belief that participatory democracy will work to women's advantage without them being elected representatives, I want to argue that formal representation should not be neglected. While participatory democracy is important to engage women in decision-making processes, an electoral system that would benefit women should form part of the negotiation process to ensure formal representation for women, especially since many of the major parties as well as the President's Council and the South African Law Commission have submitted reports on electoral systems.

It is important to view empirical evidence of systems of representation and electoral systems comparatively to determine which systems ensure the greatest advantage for women's representation. Space does not allow an elaborate discussion here but I shall attempt to summarise the most important findings of empirical studies.

SYSTEMS OF REPRESENTATION

Women's representation can take place through quotas, ministries or elected representation.

Quotas

According to Kolinsky (1991) quotas are probably the only way to ensure representation for women, apart from appointing them. Quotas reduce the backlog of career-oriented women who are unable to enter top political positions. They fail to increase party membership, however, and to make membership more attractive to women. Moreover, they do not change the hierarchical culture and practice of political systems.

Another negative effect of quotas is their widening of the gap between women representatives and grassroots women. Through quotas the commitment of parties is changed toward the educated middle class. Therefore, although quotas bring women into politics, they do not create new styles of participation. With regard to the Egyptian experience of quotas, Howard-Merriam (1990) points out that the greatest criticism against quotas is the perception of tokenism. Women do believe that men perceive women who gained representation through quotas as unable to make it on their own merit.

Ministries

A women's ministry is a government department in which the head of the ministry sits in the cabinet. In some countries women's ministries have been quite successful but their success is dependent on the number of resources they receive and the support they get from the bureaucracy. In France the women's ministry has the power to veto all laws affecting women (Albertyn 1992). A variation on a ministry is to appoint a gender committee in parliament which has only an advisory capacity as opposed to veto power.

While women's ministries may have far-reaching executive powers, they can easily create the impression that issues pertaining to women are 'separate' and need not be integrated into legislation that applies to all people. It is also difficult to envision legislation that pertains only to women (apart from reproductive issues), as legislation usually legislates *relationships between* people. This type of 'ghettoisation' of women's issues can easily defeat the purpose of women's representation.

Elected representation

The type of electoral system a country adopts ultimately determines women's lesser or greater elected representation. What follows is a discussion of the benefit of certain electoral systems for women's representation.

Electoral systems

In a comparative study of electoral systems in 23 democracies Wilma Rule (1987:483-485) has found that the best predictor of women's representation is party-list proportional representation. Rule's study shows that this system resulted in representation for women varying from 28 per cent in Sweden to 4 per cent in Greece. Non-party list systems varied from 8,8 per cent in New Zealand to 0 per cent in Australia. Countries using non-party-list systems have about one third of the representation of countries using party-list proportional representation.

The reason for the low representation of women in Greece can be ascribed to the district magnitude (number of members per district), which on average is low in Greece. The fewer members of parliament per district, the fewer women are elected. The majority of studies which have compared multimember districts with single member districts have found that multimember districts ensure greater representation for women (Darcy *et al.* 1987:116-122; Welch & Studlar 1990:401; Moncrief & Thompson 1992:254). Comparing voting districts in Germany, Kolinsky (1992) also found that more women are elected in party-list systems than in plurality systems. In multimember districts party leaders are more willing to include women as candidates. Women are more certain to be elected provided that they are on top of the list.

While the electoral system is a good predictor of women's representation it should be viewed in connection with certain contextual factors. Rule (1987:481) found a positive relationship between women's representation and workforce participation and college graduation but a negative relationship between unemployment and membership of the Roman Catholic Church.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter I attempted to develop some of Schreiner's arguments by making a theoretical argument in the first section about certain constructions of citizenship for women through their inclusion in civil society and the relationship of civil society to the state. Women are gendered beings whose gender construction by the state situates them in a specific relation to it (the state). In the reconstruction of civil society these gender constructions need to be taken into account.

In the second section I gave a brief overview of comparative literature dealing with electoral systems and systems of representation. Given the lack of space this contribution should be seen as an attempt to stimulate discussion about women and nation-building in South Africa.

REFERENCES

ALBERTYN, C. 1992. Outlining the different options. Paper presented at the IDASA workshop on empowering women in a democratic government, 4-6 December.

ATKINSON, D. 1992. State and civil society in flux. *Theoria*, 79, May.

DARCY, R., WELCH, S. & CLARK, J. 1987. *Women, elections and representation.* New York: Longman.

DIETZ, M. 1992. Feminism and theories of citizenship. In: MOUFFE, C. (ed.). *Dimensions of radical democracy.* London: Verso.

HARTMANN, H. 1981. The unhappy marriage of marxism and feminism: towards a more progressive union. In: SARGENT, L. (ed.). *Women and revolution.* Boston: South End.

HOWARD-MERRIAM, K. 1990. Guaranteed seats for political representation of women: the Egyptian example. *Women and Politics*, 10(1).

KOLINSKY, E. 1991. Political participation and parliamentary careers: women's quotas in West Germany. *West European Politics*, 14(1).

KOLINSKY, E. 1992. European electoral structures and women's political participation: a comparative study in the federal Republic of Germany. Paper presented at the Midwest Political Science Association Meeting, 9-11 April.

MANICOM, L. 1992. Ruling relations: rethinking state and gender in South African history. *Journal of African History*, 33.

MONCRIEF, G. & THOMPSON, J. 1992. Electoral structure and state legislative representation: a research note. *Journal of Politics*, 54(1).

MOUFFE, C. (ed.). 1992. *Dimensions of radical democracy.* London: Verso.

NINA, D. 1992. Beyond the frontier: civil society revisited. *Transformation*, 17.

NZIMANDE, B. & SIKHOSANA, M. 1992. Civil society and democracy. *African Communist*, 128.

PATEMAN, Carole. 1989. *The disorder of women.* Cambridge Mass: Polity Press.

PHILLIPS, A. 1991. *Engendering democracy.* Cambridge: Polity Press.

RIDDIOUGH, C. 1981. Socialism, feminism and gay/lesbian liberation. In: SARGENT, L. (ed.). *Women and revolution.* Boston: South End.

RULE, W. 1987. Electoral systems, contextual factors and women's opportunity for election to parliament in twenty-three democracies. *Western Political Quarterly*, 40.

STADLER, A. 1992. Strong states make for a strong civil society. *Theoria*, 79.

SWILLING, M. 1992. Socialism, democracy and civil society the case for associational socialism. *Theoria*, 79.

WELCH, S. & STUDLAR, D. 1990. Multi-member districts and the representation of women: evidence from Britain and the United States. *Journal of Politics*, 52(2).

CHAPTER 32

The path to non-sexist nation-building: gender issues

Sr Bernard Ncube

INTRODUCTION

Nation-building, viewed from the women's historical past and characterised by marginalisation and exclusion, is a formidable and daunting task. This is due to the size of the problem and the unfortunate past which has created the problem.

Since February 2nd 1990, women and the rest of the people of South Africa have read the signs of the times in one clearly defined mood. This mood has emerged out of the underlying support for, and strength of, a new South Africa. The reference to power and authority is no longer found in the white minority. The white minority's credibility has been crushed to the point of no return. No longer are they answerable to no one. Their oppressive measures are no longer an enforcement on the people. Majority rule through democracy is the new reference point for authority. The new language is the language of freedom. But, the legacies of apartheid are still deeply ingrained in the sociopolitical systems:

> Mental bondage is invisible violence. Formal slavery has ended. Mental slavery affects the minds of all people, in a way, it is worse than physical slavery alone. That is the person who is in mental bondage will be self-contained. Not only will the person fail to challenge the beliefs and patterns of thought which control him, he will defend and protect those beliefs and patterns of thought virtually with his last dying effort (James 1974).

Women have therefore been ushered into a new era where they will have to find themselves: who they are, who they can be and what they can be through the process of freeing themselves from the ideologies of socioeconomic, religious, political, cultural and mental bondage. They have to think for themselves and decide their strategies and destiny in order to regain their freedom and their rightful place in humanity.

Let us look at Drake Koka's prescription: 'Afrikanism' — the act of mental exorcism, putting this in women's perspective involves the decolonisation of the African woman's mind and must be seen as a collective enterprise, a communal exorcism and intellectual bath in which we need one another's help to scrub those nooks in our minds which we cannot scour by ourselves. This decolonisation of physical and mental bondage is an enormous task that is facing us during the transitional period of the liberation struggle for independence and postcolonial development.

Women are faced with the reconstruction of being people who have gone through a 500-year period of dehumanisation, suffering under the most inhuman acts of atrocity, mental torture, economic deprivation, political suppression and oppression, social rejection and destruction of the spiritual beliefs and ruthless process of deculturisation. Women have gone through a historical experience the main feature of which was the total destruction of African civilisation.

POLITICAL STRUCTURES

A site for women's struggle

The call for democracy in this transitional period is a drama of extraordinary political changes, which demand extraordinary responses from women. The transfer of power: by way of one person, one vote and a non-racial, non-sexist and democratic South Africa is inescapable — but the strategies for effecting it and its practice must be learned. Women of all nations in this process must be taken on board for this change. For South Africa to be a healthy democratic society women must be empowered to have a moral obligation as citizens to use their hard-won freedom to participate fully in the life of their society. Their voices must be heard in the public debates, in electing representatives, in decision-making processes for shaping a future that will continue to embrace the fundamental values of freedom and the sovereignty of majority rule.

ECONOMIC STRUCTURES

The crux of the matter lies here. The transfer of power in the economic structures is very vague. Negotiations are seen to be focusing primarily on political issues and not on the economic issues. The bottom line currently is the question of governance through majority rule. But, there is another bottom line which is crucial to women's struggle that will determine ultimately even more important *true* change in South Africa. This bottom line is economic justice. It is interesting and even frightening that this issue has, in the discussions, so far not assumed the highest priority in the negotiations.

The question is: *what significance will the transfer of political power have if it is not accompanied by a transfer of economic power?* We note that there are similarities between black and white women's issues for resisting apartheid such as sexist language, violence against women, sexual harassment, work benefits and job discrimination on the basis of gender. There are, however, issues that particularly concern black women, such as education for themselves as well as for their children, homelessness, economic justice, customary law and indigenous traditions. These issues are being brought into organisations in which women are participating. There are also other questions. For example, what role will women have in leadership with all that is emerging? *What place will 'lobola' (bridal dowry) have for Africans in a democratic society?* What constitutional rights will be guaranteed to women? The question of the Bill of Rights: What meaning does liberation have for women and men in the home? What relationships are possible for black and white women? What is the economic result of landlessness, etc?

PATRIARCHAL CHURCH STRUCTURES

The most important phase of the women's struggle to generate the most radical cultural critique of our way of living, started when women named the root-cause of their pain and deprivation within the conceptual framework of 'patriarchy'. Patriarchy is a hierarchical system of domination where men with power ruled all other beings in the cosmos with their ideological invention of sexism, racism, classism, cultural imperialism and androcenti. This system of 'domination/ submission' has promoted war, injustice and ecological disaster in the history of human beings. Women strongly believe that 'violence' is based on 'power over' which has as its main characteristic *man in power*: he destroys at will the right relationship between all beings. He devalues life at will — thus women see rape of women and the rape of the Earth coming from the same root.

Patriarchal church structures are all built on the system of 'power over'. For example the system of apartheid in South Africa is not just a political phenomenon but has permeated all areas of life. The church is fundamental in teaching and promoting societal values. In South Africa these have been apartheid values. This reality makes it difficult to search for a starting place to understand the role of the churches in opposing apartheid. None of these churches are strongly anti-apartheid. The key actors within the churches in the struggle against apartheid are not the main institutional denominations as a whole, but an amalgamation of ecumenical organisations (principally Institute for Contextual Theology) some leaders in the

South African Council of Churches and various individual denomination leaders and a long list of independent church related organisations termed parachurch groups.

Therefore when I speak of churches participating in the struggle against apartheid, I am referring mostly to a collective of these groups of individuals and organisations. They are the ones that form and give the broader picture of the church's participation in the struggle against apartheid.

In the light of these realities the role of the church in opposing apartheid is twofold: the struggle taking place inside the churches, and the parachurch groups challenging the church and society.

In discussing church structures, I wish to emphasize that women-folk here are a silent and oppressed majority. In this hour of historical transition, the church/churches cannot go on with its tragic role of blessing and legitimising the oppression and exploitation of women, either by its silence or by its collusion with the imperial powers. Women need a new horizon of meaning in their beliefs, a fresh prioritising of values of a human and humane of living. They need a life based on the dignity of every person on our social and cosmic interdependence, and life's roots in matter.

Women must revive the prophetic biblical message to sustain the struggle for freedom and justice, to resist unrelentlessly the domination and every sort of dictatorship emanating from the centres and institutions of accumulated wealth and power.

Affirmative action in churches means a holistic approach to the Bible to restore to women the fight in defence of their rights. These rights include the right to shape their future, to define their goals and to tread the path they choose instead of letting their minds be colonised, their hands and their resources mortgaged, and their destiny hijacked by the creators of their poverty.

The common denomination of all religions is the:

- denunciation of evil, injustice and oppressive systems, be they secular or religious,
- prophetic vision and proclamations,
- announcing of the new life or the reign of the Creator,
- presentation of the New Humanity in the image of the Creator.

WHAT RECONSTRUCTION MEANS TO SOUTH AFRICAN WOMEN

Women should enter this process of reconstruction and nation-building with well informed minds and be aware of what it entails.

Reconstruction starts with the definition of *Justice, Peace, Reconciliation, Reparation and Restitution.* These are the political issues facing our country today. We cannot speak about moral issues in the abstract. They demand concrete acts by which reconstruction and nation-building can be measured and exhibited. That is to say, genuine justice and peace, find concrete expression in reparation and restitution. If this idea is carried to its logical conclusion, it means justice, peace reparation and restitution are integrally connected. These concepts, if separated, will violate the inherent interconnectedness which is essential in the attainment of a genuine political community — a democratised South Africa.

Women therefore argue for a conception of a democratic process that fosters political participation accompanied by reparational and restitutionary justice aimed at creating and sustaining a human community. Nation-building processes cannot miss one of the concepts in the completion of the South African political reality.

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

Women ought to understand what they are calling for. Often the call for justice is limited to its distributive dimension. While this is essential, it does however omit the way in which the powerful enact and reproduce their power. The call for affirmative action should be seen in terms of the demand to go beyond the distributive focus that embraces the procedural issues of participation in deliberation and decision-making structures.

The notion is the same as 'She has made it' when is she is the manager of the firm or she has been ordained a priest in a church structure that is completely male dominated. She has been taught how to fish — but the fish-pond is covered over for her. This position will not change the power dynamics. In fact, her presence will undoubtedly legitimise the power structure. It might even lead to a few women becoming accomplices in the oppression of their own kind. If this happens, the centre of political power remains untouched and unchallenged. The crux of the matter for affirmative action for women is the genuine political power expressed in ownership of land, autonomy in economics and control of her life and destiny.

RECONCILIATION IN THE RECONSTRUCTION OF THE NATION

If one relates this concept to the heart of the Bible/Gospel it becomes clear that reparation and restitution are the prescription/ingredients of repentance. Ernest Campbell points out the inherent social implications when he says:

> There is in repentance a certain quality of infinitude, with the penitent mood comes new insight, fresh illumination leading to an almost painful anxiety to

> make atonement to the person or persons wronged, to society, to the spiritual order which has been violated. The repentant person stands ready for any task, however great, for any service, however distasteful. Repentance is thus transformed into a moral dynamic *(Ibid.)*

This statement indicates that concrete acts of reparation and restitution are the birth-pangs of reconciliation. It follows that justice will definitely give peace, stability and prosperity. The theological argument that demands the appropriation of the Jubilee Year shows clearly that the latter is an essential part of our liberation agenda. The denial of the people's divine right to land in *Leviticus* is tantamount to rejection of 'comprehensive' social and economic empowerment of all the people and this means landlessness, homelessness, lack of basic needs — food, clothes and shelter - and the actualisation of a just democratic, social and political order cannot be attained.

REFERENCES

CAMPBELL, Ernest. 1992. In: MOSOME, David. *Black theology manual.* Pretoria: University of South Africa, Department of Theology.

JAMES, G. M. 1974. In: MOSOME, David. *Black theology manual.* Pretoria: University of South Africa, Department of Theology.

338

CHAPTER 33

Response to comments by Gouws and Ncube

Jenny Schreiner

Both Sr Bernard Ncube (see Chapter 32) and Amanda Gouws (see Chapter 31) have raised important issues that need further elaboration. I have selected a few that have triggered my thoughts — this is by no means a complete response. Indeed to begin to do justice to the topic of building a non-sexist nation, we would have to produce a book, or at least have a gender corrective to each of the chapters of this book!

It is the androcentrism of current political analyses which poses us with the tasks of including gender as a category of analysis and unravelling both the empirical and theoretical implications of the inclusion or non-inclusion of gender. Maxine Molyneux, in the early article referred to in my contribution above, showed how by including the position of women in a study of a precapitalist society, she had turned the authoritative analysis of the social relations of that society on its head. The existing economic and political power relations within the society when examined in a manner sensitive to gender relations, were substantially different from what the literature of Terray had portrayed.

The impact of her work has not been adequately recognised, even within socialist and Marxist feminist circles, and certainly not outside these schools of thought. Sr Barnard refers to androcentrism as a component of patriarchy. What needs to be added is that androcentrism, as a component of patriarchy, is also taken lock, stock and barrel into most theories and analyses. The challenge of non-sexist nation-building is made greater and more complex since we are guided by largely androcentric theories of the state, civil society and nationhood.

I had tried to avoid dealing with the theoretical concepts of the state, civil society, citizenship, nation — given the brevity of the chapter. When writing about gender, one is tempted to cover the whole world stage as well as address the gender issues.

Dr Gouws is bolder than I am in this regard, and I think stands on the edge of the trap set by androcentric approaches to gender-sensitive analysts — trying to engage too much in too little space.

Hartman's critiques of Marxism do not take the work of various Marxists on the woman question adequately into account, and moreover she deals with a specific brand of Marxism. The South African tradition of Marxist-Leninism for example has a creative application to the South African reality which she would not have found in the economistic Marxism she was responding to. That is not however to say that South African Marxists have paid sufficient attention to the inclusion of gender into their analysis.

Post-modernism requires a detailed response, for which there is not the space in this short response. The fundamental philosophical tenants of post-modernism, being antidevelopmental, antiprogrammatic and essentially unchallenging to the *status quo* of capitalist society, do not, I would argue, give us a solid basis for a systematic and coherent approach to nation-building, let alone to non-sexist nation-building in a society cut across by apartheid, class divisions, religious and cultural complexities.

Amanda Gouws warns that we cannot assume 'gender neutrality' in the manner in which women were incorporated into civil society, and argues that 'women's groups are not incorporated in a gender neutral fashion because women are incorporated *as women*'. The phrase 'gender neutrality' always raises the question for me of whether this is our aim? I would argue that no society can be gender neutral — the biological differences between the male and female sex determine that our social existence as men and women must be different. Our goal surely is not to create a South African nation in which men are identical to women (although that may be better than creating one in which women are identical to men!). Our goal is to create a society in which women are not oppressed for being women; where women's human rights (which are different in certain respects from men's) are recognised and protected; and in which society is organised in such a way that our life as women is a liberating and empowering experience in which our full potential as human beings, with the potential of and right to choose motherhood, is realised.

Sr Bernard highlights the role of ideology and culture in sustaining patriarchy, touching on customary law and indigenous traditions, lobola, and religion. Dr Gouws acknowledges that women are oppressed in different ways depending on their racial and/or class status. The interconnection between culture, ideology, and racial and class divisions are complex in South Africa, and we cannot tackle the oppression of patriarchy without understanding the impact of cultural and traditional factors.

I have recently been told of a cooperative in a rural area, which was effectively sabotaged at a seasonally crucial period, by the withdrawal of all the women members in order to do unpaid labour at the bidding of the chiefs. This practice of forced labour is entrenched by the attitudes and powers of traditional leaders. It places severe limits on the extent to which reconstruction programmes can independently empower rural women, when they are still living under patriarchal and feudal oppression. Lobola, the purchase of the ability of women to work, should be seen in the same light: as an archaic practice that must be subordinated to a process of economic and political empowerment and democratisation.

Sr Bernard has dealt with the challenges to the Christian church, and to women Christians. The religious and cultural attitude towards women of the other major religions (particularly relevant in South Africa would be the Muslim and Jewish religions), are perhaps more oppressive in that religious law is far more rigidly practised within everyday life in these communities. There are significant challenges from women and from progressive religious leaders within these communities that must be strengthened and encouraged in the period of nation-building.

Amanda Gouws very usefully raises the issue of electoral systems, and how these can contribute to raising women's voice in society. It is crucial that the role of women within elected political and state structures and their role in civil society are seen as two essential components of non-sexist nation-building. Participatory democracy does not exclude elected representative structures. It offers, unlike bourgeois democracy within the Westminister system, in addition to elected governmental structures, mechanisms for active involvement of the voter, not only on election day, but in an ongoing way through the interaction of structures of civil society and the elected and state structures. This approach of government engaging with organs of civil society in a meaningful way is not part of bourgeos democracy or Westminister-style government. While agreeing that the Party list system and the multimember constituency system have given far greater representation to women, we should also ask which electoral system allows for greatest accountability and most effective exercise of the right of recall by the voting population. Once again the issues cannot be approached simply from the gender perspective.

Affirmative action must indeed, as Sr Bernard argues, entail the genuine political empowerment of women expressed in ownership of land, autonomy in economics and control of her life and destiny. We should be very wary of approaches to affirmative action which resort to mechanisms and structures and do not focus on the process on which the nation has to embark for affirmative action to be accessible to the rank and file women, the ordinary working women, and not only to middle class professional women.

Winning the right to control her life and destiny is crucial to the empowerment of women in South Africa's future. An aspect of this which is seldom adequately dealt with, is the arena of reproductive rights. Gouws warns that the manner in which mothers are defined is crucial to our emancipation or to our continued subordination. Moreover, the extent to which women have the right to choose to be or not to be mothers; the right you choose to bring a child into the world knowing that she, and the child's father, will be able to provide the essential needs of that child — health, shelter, clothing, food, education and peace; and the right to determine the nature of the family into which they choose to bring the child; are all fundamental to the empowering of women, and particularly to the empowering of working class black women, who have been the most disadvantaged in all these respects by the apartheid system and patriarchal ideology.

Finally, let me emphasise the significance of a gender-sensitive reconstruction programme for the women of South Africa, and hence for the nation as a whole. Should we allow a sexist reconstruction programme to emerge, men will have more and better jobs; men will have better access to land and housing; education will benefit the boy-children rather than the girl-children, etc. The power differential between men and women will indeed be worsened by a reconstruction programme that does not aim in each component of the programme to redress and remove the gender inequalities. A reconstruction programme that *does* correct gender imbalances in all areas of the programme will be an empowering process for women. It will put women of all racial groups and classes in a more powerful position from which to continue the ongoing struggle against patriarchy, a struggle which will not end on election day or when there is a democratic constitution in South Africa. For women, and particularly for black working class women, *aluta continua* in a very real sense!

CHAPTER 34

Women and their role in political, social and economic change in South Africa

Mankoko Molete[*]

INTRODUCTION

This chapter should be regarded as a contribution to a continuous debate on the issue of 'discrimination against women'. The issue cannot be tackled on its own without raising the issue of the 'struggle for national liberation' of the Azanian masses. This contribution will address the relationship of the two struggles, and pose a possible solution.

BACKGROUND TO THE STRUGGLE FOR LIBERATION BY THE AZANIAN MASSES

The colonisation of South Africa in 1652, by the European settlers, as part of the colonisation of other communities, has led to its integration into the European capitalistic process. South Africa stands out as the most industrialized and wealthiest country on the African continent today. This is so because the wealth of this country, it will be shown, has been founded on a racist, political capitalist system.

Racism has been invoked as an exclusion principle to facilitate the exploitation of the indigenous people. This led to the denial of their participation in decision-making processes — which led, in turn, to the denial of 'land tenure rights' to land already forcibly expropriated from them. Capitalism represents the imposition of an exploitative economic system supported by an oppressive social system. Oshadi Mangena (1987), argues that '(t)he indigenous people were forcibly and gradually proletarised to be transferred into cheap labour for the establishment and reproduction of the Capitalist mode of production in South Africa' (Oshadi Mangena 1987:) There have been arguments to the contrary: that capitalism is an unwilling victim of racism. Van den Berghe (1967) argues that 'apartheid is economically irrational or dysfunctional for the Capitalist Economic System' (Van den Berghe 1967:183-216). Chipeya (1986) argues appositely that 'racism and capitalism are the twin pillars of apartheid'. She further argues that 'capitalism has actively and almost wholeheartedly embraced racism. It has exploited African labour through the migrant labour system, and earned excessively large profits" (Chipeya 1987:2).

---

[*] With contributions and comments from other researchers on gender relations.

From the foregoing, it is not difficult to understand why liberation movements regard the elimination of capitalism as synonymous with the elimination of apartheid. The elimination of sexism is an important part of this programme as African women have come to be exploited excessively, because they are women.

WOMEN'S LIBERATION

An all-encompassing definition of this states, 'women's liberation aims to promote the emancipation, rights and interests of women as defined by the women themselves' this definition takes into account the differences in approach and strategies to women's liberation. Some of these have come to be known as radical feminism, socialist feminism or womanism.

Radical feminists emphasize the fact that the main cause of the exploitation of women is male domination and patriarchy, their approach centres on the diversity of ways in which men exercise power over women and the social and material circumstances which have tended to favour more or less rigid hierarchies. They have identified changes in production techniques that denied women independent control over subsistence production. These changes combined the reorganization of women's labour around the family rather than around the community of kin group. The state has been identified at a political level as consolidating and sustaining the power of male heads of household over women. The main characteristic identified is: 'The set of hierarchical relations which has a material base and in which those are hierarchical relations between men, which enables them to control women.' This is defined as patriarchy. This concept emphasises the benefits accruing directly to all men, from the domestic, labour, reproductive and sexual subordination of women.

And thus, according to Chipeya (1986) '... from the definitions on radical feminism and the subsequent discussions on it, class relations are thus seen as subordinate to gender (sexual) relationships which are socially constructed' (Chipeya 1986:3). From the radical feminist perspective, the elimination of patriarchy is thus seen as the main thrust of women's liberation.

Socialist feminists point to the development of capitalism and capitalist relations of production as being at the heart of the subordination of women in contemporary society. They do not deny the existence of patriarchy, but they argue that patriarchy exists because capitalism provides a base for it by exacerbating the hierarchical nature of the sexual division of labour and by encouraging sexual antogonism at the expense of class solidarity. Reiter (1975) for instance supports this view by pointing to studies of places such as Colombia and Nigeria which have shown that in the process of capitalist penetration, patterns of male domination over women become more pronounced. In other studies Chipeya (1985) points to the sexual division of labour which resulted from the emergence of capitalism during the industrial revolution in England and the USA. This has found particularly in the transition to wage labour and the accompanying class struggle. Patriarchy and capitalism were mutually reinforcing, each struggle influencing the direction the other took. Capitalism enhanced competition within the ranks of working people and helped reinforce patriarchal relations within the family by offering women and children lower wage rates than men.

Male workers used trade union organisation and power to protect their own position *vis-à-vis* capitalists and also to secure advantages over female workers through actions aimed at segregating women within the labour market to preserve patriarchal privilege at home. The development of capitalism was associated with the development of the privatized family, which no longer had a direct part to play in social production. This resulted in dire consequences for women in that they became dependent on men in a way that they had never been in procapitalist society. They became entrenched in a rigid sexual division of labour where women's primary role is located in the family and men's role is located in the sphere of production. Chipeya (1986) argues that:

> The sexual division of labour is particularly advantageous for capitalist society, firstly in that it ensures that certain necessary reproductive functions are performed - Biological reproduction of the species, serving the present and future workforce, and playing a key part in the socialization of the younger generation. Secondly, it provides a readily available pool of female labour, which can be drawn into and alternatively, withdrawn from production according to the needs of the economy. In addition, the reserve army of female labour can be used in direct competition with the male labour force.

Thus, the socialist feminist perspective is that: 'Women's liberation is part of the historic struggle of the working class against capitalism, and that support for building an independent feminist movement is part of the strategy of the working class.'

Although the socialist feminist theory is an improvement in certain areas not considered by radical feminists, it does not offer an exhaustive account of why women have a subordinate position in society; how this inequality arose in the first place; the historical persistence of male dominance; and the various forms it take in different societies. Also, it does not explain the inequality that exists between the different race groups. This aspect is taken into consideration by African women's feminism.

African women's feminism (womanism) is to be seen in terms of two ideologies which are slightly different, but not necessarily in conflict. One refers to the feminism of women in advanced capitalist countries, while the other refers to the experience of women in the Third World. African women's feminism criticises radical and socialist (Marxist) feminism which tends to view women as an undifferentiated mass, with oppression being a phenomenon directed from outside the group. The difference between women in terms of colour and class were not recognized as powerful sources of interwoven discrimination and oppression.*

African women tend to suffer more from economic, political and social oppression than white women. The issue of interwoven discrimination and oppression has been described by Bell Hooks (1981), thus:

> White women liberationists are willing to acknowledge that the women's movement was consciously and deliberately structured to exclude black and other non-white women and to serve primarily the interests of middle and upper class, college educated white women seeking social equality with middle and upper class white men. While they may agree that white women involved with women's liberation groups are racist and classist, they tend to feel that this in no way undermines the movement. But it is precisely the racism and classism of exponents of feminist ideology, that cause a large majority of black women to support their motives and reject active participation in any effort to organise a women's movement (Bell Hooks, 1981:148). The perspective of African women feminists (womanists) involving women in the Third World is the struggle for national liberation or for liberation from patriarchal and economic domination.

---

* Womanism (African feminism): 'Feminism' (all colours) definitely teaches women that they are capable. In addition to this, womanist tradition, because of our experiences during slavery, assumes that Afrian women are already capable. Womanism is chosen, because of its sound, feel and fit. Womanism calls to mind the spirit of the women it seeks to describe.

Many Third World countries share the following characteristics which form the basis of the exploitation of women:

(i) Women are generally excluded from political and economic powers.

(ii) Their countries are ruled by male-dominated and oppressive regimes (South Africa/Azania) or by male dominant and exploitative regimes of the indigenous people (El Salvador and Peru).

(iii) Women are subject to 'traditional' customs which prescribe a secondary role to them. Here caution must be exercised when using the word 'traditional', since, owing to various intervening variables between the original procapitalist traditions, and contemporary traditions (i.e. colonialism and capitalism, which have either positively or negatively influenced these traditions), the word 'traditional' in some cases does not reflect the true customs and practices of the indigenous people.

(iv) The countries are very poor or there is a very unequal distribution of wealth.

Miranda Davies describes these women as facing a 'double' burden. Firstly there is the burden created by international expansion of capitalism, made possible by colonialism and imperialism, which has resulted in certain dominant patterns of Third World dependency on the advanced countries. She argues that

> (a)t the same time, more and more women in countries such as South Africa, and El Salvador are recognizing the need to fight for their own freedom as women and as half the oppressed population of the Third World. They realize that women bear the worst consequences of poverty and exploitation for they suffer a double (and in many cases a quadruple), oppression, based on colonialism, sex, class and race or caste (1983:874).

She further argues that sexist exploitation in the liberation movements occurs because of a tendency for women in their movements, to play roles which are an extension of their role in society, e.g. nurses, cooks or couriers. The above three perspectives are theoretical and emphasize various aspects of this exploitation based on either political, economic and social interpretations or on actual experiences. The examination of the subordination of women must take into account all three aspects of feminism, i.e. look at the issue in a totality in order to appreciate the relevance of each perspective to combat overall exploitation and oppression of women. Thus, women's liberation in Azania/South Africa needs to be seen in the context of aiming to dismantle apartheid, capitalism, racism, sexism, and patriarchy. This means the transformation of the social relations of production and the construction of radically new relations between men and women in a fundamentally new society.

AFRICAN WOMEN AND THE FIGHT TO LIBERATE THEMSELVES

African women in Azania/South Africa have been involved, through history, in the national liberation struggle in different ways. The historic participation of African women in the national and women liberation struggles, predates the era of nationwide organised resistance in male dominated organizations. This participation is best described thus:

> The story of Nonquausi, a traditional doctor of high standing, who appealed to the Xhosa community to kill their cattle and destroy their crops during the early stages of the black and white conflict should be seen as a form of struggle against capitalist oppression and exploitation. Nonquasi was advocating another means of opposition based on traditional beliefs and practices (Mangena 1983:75-77).

African women have become the cornerstone of the labour movement. They have come to dominate the membership and leadership of trade unions in Azania/South Africa, and they contribute to the unions' successful defence of workers rights.

A most important example of women's specific demands, won by African women, in Azania/South Africa, which illustrates their consciousness of their oppression and exploitation specifically as women, is job security and maternity rights. In other areas of the struggle African women still need to be greatly mobilized to take active part in the shaping of their future. They need to be made more aware of other issues — the political, social and economic. How to affect them, and the part they have to play. An example of an 'issue' that they need to address for themselves collectively is the infamous three bills on discrimination against women that were proposed in early 1993. These bills are supposed to be for: 'Equal opportunities', 'Violence against women' and 'Discrimination against women'. The Deputy Minister of Justice, Sheila Camerer, vociferously advocated them as addressing 'issues' affecting, white, liberated, middle class women. When African women tried to address this through the Justice Ministry they were told that their request for more time in order to translate them into indigenous languages to ensure participation by more African women could not be granted, as enough extension had been granted for countrywide workshops by white, liberated middle class women's movements to be conducted. Suffice it to say, the extension requested by the white, liberated, middle class women's movements, which had elected themselves as representatives and spokespersons of all women, (African and white) was granted.

The pertinent point here, is that this is yet another example, of what happens, if white women, elect themselves to be representatives of African women. They approach 'issues' from the white perspective only, and neglect the African women's perspectives.

CONCLUSION

Before concluding, essential points need to be reiterated: self-definition of oppression and liberation by the oppressed themselves is the cardinal element of any honest attempt to understand what women's liberation means. From this, we have been able to understand that women's liberation spans oppression experienced in the home, in society generally and in the place of work. The definition of women's liberation as meaning the elimination of capitalism, sexism, patriarchy and racism must be understood in this context.

The involvement of African women and their successes in the labour movements have been discussed and understood, to show their capability. We can now conclude that in order to address 'women's issues' in Azania/South Africa, African women need to take a more active part in all areas, i.e. socially, politically and economically and that the white women in liberation movements need to learn to stop playing representatives of African women in issues that affect them directly. African and white women need to understand the struggle from each other's perspective, and try to work together, to solve problems, while recognising their differences. They need to work more at bridging the gaps between themselves, first, before attempting to unite. This, in essence, means that any women's organisation needs to fight the struggle for women's liberation in the context of a broader struggle for societal liberation.

REFERENCES

CHIPEYA, A.S. 1985. *The importance of rural African women to the economic success and development of mining and agricultural industries in South Africa.* Unpublished dissertation, Oxford.

CHIPEYA, A.S. 1986a. *The control and motivation of black workers: an examination of strategies of worker control and motivation and their application to migrant workers and women in South Africa.* M.A. dissertation. The Hague.

CHIPEYA, A.S. 1986b. *Is feminism relevant to the Third World?* Paper presented at the Forum on International Women's Day Celebration, Institute of Social Studies, The Hague. March.

CHIPEYA, A.S. 1987. *Women's liberation and national liberation.* (Azanian/South African Urban Women Workers' Perspective) Paper presented at Discussion Day organised by the Thema Groep Vrouwen in/en Derde Wêreld in Collaboration with the Programme on Women and Development, 15 May, University of Amsterdam.

DAVIS, MIRANDA. 1983. Women in struggle: An overview. *Third World Quarterly*, 5(4) October:874-880.

HOOKS, BELL. 1981. *Ain't I a woman.* p. 148, s.l.

MANGENA, OSHADI. 1987. *Women and change in South Africa.* A paper presented towards a Ph.D., p. 3, s.l.

OSHADI, MANGENA. 1983. M.A. dissertation. The Hague.

REITER, RAYNA R. (ed.) 1975. *Towards an anthropology of women.* New York: Monthly Review Press.

VAN DEN BERGHE, Pierre L. 1967. *South Africa; a study in conflict.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

VAN DEN BERGHE, Pierre L. 1967. *Race and racism; a comparative perspective.* New York: Wiley, 1967.

SECTION

VIII

VIOLENCE — A PERVASIVE INHIBITOR OF NATION-BUILDING

CHAPTER

35 Political violence in South Africa: are we putting out the fire from the top or the bottom?
Chris de Kock

36 The myth of black-on-black violence
Fatima Meer

37 Violence and nation-building in South Africa
Jacklyn Cock

38 Response to the comments by Meer and Cock
Chris de Kock

CHAPTER 35

Political violence in South Africa: are we putting out the fire from the top or the bottom?

Chris de Kock

IS POLITICAL VIOLENCE ESCALATING OR DE-ESCALATING?

In recent weeks (the first two weeks of March 1993) there have been hopeful signs that political violence — specifically hostel-township violence — particularly in the Witwatersrand-Vaal Triangle, is beginning to de-escalate (cf. *The Weekly Mail*, 26 February to 4 March 1993, p. 5). Should this de-escalation become a permanent trend over the next few months and years, then in December 1992 South Africa would have had one of its best Christmas presents ever and full attention could then be devoted to the mammoth task of restructuring, democratisation, development, reconciliation and nation-forming. Nevertheless — and the author does not wish to be a prophet of doom — the reduction in the level of violence over the period from December 1992 to February 1993 should be interpreted with extreme circumspection, for the following reasons:

- There is usually a lull in the violence — especially on the Witwatersrand — during the December/January holiday season, for the simple reason that migrant labourers return to the homelands for their annual break and possibly also because a greater spirit of goodwill prevails at this time of the year. A decrease or increase in violence over a very brief period (say two to three months) has often occurred since September 1984 (the beginning of the current phase of violence), and this kind of lull is not sufficient to indicate what will happen in 1993 and onwards.
- It is even possible that the incidence of violence might decrease month by month, as has gradually occurred after September 1991 (see Figure 1), but the seriousness (for example in terms of the number of people killed or injured and the financial loss per incident) has increased (see Figure 2). The three recent attacks since the

beginning of March 1993 in the Table Mountain area in Natal are a striking illustration of this point — just as one begins to believe that violence is beginning to de-escalate one finds that attacks have taken place, costing many lives and holding extremely serious implications for human relations.

- The history of political violence in South Africa, especially since 1984, has frequently surprised and disconcerted sociopolitical analysts and conflict analysts. Although some of these analysts had believed that after the historic events of February 1990 South Africa would enter a period of tranquillity, peace and growth, by August 1990 they were shocked by the events on the Rand. It is better to prepare a worst-case scenario and take preventive action than to be caught off-guard. All the factors that to date have generated the violence still exist and, in the run-up to the election of an interim government as well as in the transitional period, may come far more strongly to the fore, particularly in the first few months of an interim government. For example it can be assumed that
  - there will be far more intense political competition in the run-up to the election;
  - the levels of fear, uncertainty and insecurity and the resultant insistence on self-protection and defence will become stronger just before and even after an election;
  - a potentially large number of conspiracies may form whose members, realising that the final moment of truth has dawned, may attempt to sabotage the elections and the transitional process;
  - rising expectations and the unsatisfactory realisation of such expectations — especially shortly after the elections — may create a vast reservoir of easily mobilised frustration and aggression.

Therefore the question posed in the title of this section can be answered as follows:

There are hopeful signs of de-escalation, but the levels of violence are still too high and the approaching election may cause an escalation in violence. This is why political violence remains a crucial factor which has to be taken into account and why the ideal of a marked reduction in levels of violence is equally important for effective restructuring, democratisation, development, reconciliation and nation-forming.

'CATCH 22' — ARE WE PUTTING OUT THE FIRE FROM THE TOP OR THE BOTTOM?

Quite understandably there will be those who, on the basis of the last few sentences in the preceding section, would like to deduce that the author does not really want to relinquish the old order and consequently wishes to use violence as a convenient excuse for advocating the postponement or even cancellation of an election that would herald a new order.[1] This deduction should be categorically rejected. There should be no doubt that the South African conflict (destructive conflict) can be reduced or transformed to a constructive conflict only if the following issues were to be addressed: the historical injustices of colonialism and apartheid; the current unbalanced distribution of power and economic means; minority fears and the frustration of the majority; distorted intergroup relations and the negative stereotypes each side has formed. These issues could be resolved through the processes of restructuring, democratisation (which includes an election for a constitution-formulating mechanism), development, reconciliation and nation-forming.

In short: a revolutionary type of surgery is urgently required to restore the extremely sick patient (South Africa) to health. Few political analysts or politicians would dispute this. Furthermore there can be no doubt that since February 1990 the operating table has *at least* been prepared for the operation. Indeed, in view of the forthcoming elections, the patient is already on the table and the first incisions may already have been made. However, as everyone knows, any patient undergoing such vital and radical surgery has to have his blood pressure, pulse, temperature and so forth continually kept at the right levels otherwise he may die on the operating table. If this operation analogy is cautiously extended to South Africa, the country is facing a dangerous 'Catch 22' situation. The continuation of large-scale restructuring and nation-forming is now urgently required.

Political violence and instability, however, are the biggest obstacles in the way of this operation. At the same time it is inarguably true that the injustices of the past have generated the unbalanced distribution of power and means of life and that the negative stereotypes formed by all sides have also, among other things, helped to create the current political violence and instability. In other words, if restructuring takes place, it will help to reduce the levels of violence. However, the problem is that there are other factors involved in the current violence and these stimulate more violence and make restructuring difficult or even impossible. The 'Catch 22' impasse has to be broken to make nation-forming possible, and the only way that this can be accomplished is to find methods to reduce or even eliminate the levels of violence. If violence and political instability can be reduced, the results — which could strongly promote restructuring, development, reconciliation and nation-forming (by analogy, the operation could then be speedily and successfully carried out) — may include the following:

- Domestic and foreign confidence in investment and development (foreign investment confidence is usually based on domestic confidence) would recover and encourage indispensable investment (in the broad sense).

- The development of and improvement in life circumstances might be promoted at grassroots level (for example in informal settlements, hostels and hostel environments), especially in the communities in which violence has become endemic and deteriorating living conditions have provoked further violence.[2]
- This will eliminate most of the obstacles to legitimacy impeding the path of the forthcoming election for an interim government (if political violence and intimidation occur during the election they will be used to call into question the outcome of the election and may entail serious problems of legitimacy for an interim government).
- This will break down the barriers of isolation between conflicting and antagonistic groups, leading to positive interaction which in turn may eliminate negative stereotypes (reconciliation among groups who are killing and injuring one another is almost unthinkable).
- This will allow the current vast expenditure on violence, incurred by policing, defence, security and medical care, to be made available for development and for reconciliation and nation-forming.
- This will consolidate the police force's divided attention (between common-law crime and political violence) and help to restore good relations (which have been harmed, among other things, by the current violence) between the police and communities, so that the police, with the co-operation of the community, can give their undivided attention to and combat the crime wave which is sweeping the country and which is also heating up the political temperature.

The author is therefore not in favour of calling off or postponing an election which would herald the processes of serious restructuring, development and nation-forming, but advocates a concerted effort to eliminate, as far as humanly possible, the factors underlying the current violence which may intensify in the run-up to and the aftermath of an election so that the processes discussed in the rest of this publication can take place under optimum conditions. The standpoint is therefore that, as far as possible in the medium and the long term, the fires of violence should be extinguished in their embers so that they cannot easily flare up again. However, in the short term the flames of the fires will have to be extinguished from the top in order to get at the smouldering embers at the bottom.

THE UNDERLYING FACTORS OF VIOLENCE: WHAT TRIGGERS IT, MAKES IT ESCALATE, AND WHAT IS THE PROGNOSIS FOR THE NEXT YEAR OR TWO?

This section is based on a model of the dynamics of the present political violence which on several occasions the author has presented as a paper during 1991 and 1992 (see for example De Kock 1992a) and has used in his capacity as expert witness before the Tokoza Committee of the Goldstone Commission as an analytical model of the seven incidents of violence in the Katorus area between 8 September 1991 and 8 April 1992 (cf. Goldstone 1992 and De Kock 1992b). The model has also been empirically tested since then in an investigation into the hostel-township conflict (cf. De Kock *et al.* 1993). The following three groups of factors which directly underlie the current violence will be discussed synoptically:

- factors promoting violence;
- factors that may trigger the promoting factors;
- factors that may make violence escalate or de-escalate (or make the consequences of violence more or less serious).

Promoting factors

Factor 1

Particularly since February 1990 there has been an *intense horizontal competition for political power* among all the various political interest groups in South Africa — Natal has been marked since 1987 by this competition. Competition is taking place without the existence of any really applicable, unambiguous set of rules for political conduct (a political code of conduct) acceptable to all, in which not all the members of the umpiring team (for example the SAP, the judiciary and the peace structures) are equally acceptable and legitimate to all the players. The National Peace Accord of September 1991 includes the establishment of a code of political conduct to regulate intense competition[3] but after 18 months the Accord still suffers from various shortcomings. The most serious of these are:

- the vagueness and ambiguity of the rules of conduct (for example the rules for peaceful protest and private armies);
- an apparent lack of joint commitment from the high-profile leaders to the Peace Accord, and the lack of joint, reiterated emphasis on the absolute importance of the accord;
- lack of popularisation of the accord;
- rules of conduct that cannot be sanctioned;
- not all the political interest groups signed the accord and are therefore not bound by it;
- that surveys done by the HSRC indicate that after 18 months the public has not developed much faith in the success of the accord and therefore does not believe that the accord and its peace structures can reduce the levels of violence.

In discussing factor 4, more will be said about the non-acceptability of the umpiring team to the different players.

It can therefore be assumed that competition among the parties will intensify during the run-up to the election. Should the higher levels of competition also occur without the existence of clear and applicable game rules and legitimate umpires, the level of violence will rise rather than fall.

The study on hostel-township conflict (cf. De Kock *et al.* 1993) found that there was a diametric difference between the party-support profile and the leadership-support profile of the hostels involved in higher and medium levels of violence and their township environments, whereas the hostels with low levels of violence and their township environments revealed basically similar profiles (see Figures 3 and 4). What activated the difference was the generalised assumption among high-conflict hostel dwellers in particular that it was ANC policy to drive them out of the hostels back to KwaZulu, whereas the ANC supporters in the township environments of the high-conflict hostels were either uncertain or believed that it was indeed ANC policy to close down the hostels (see Figures 5 and 6). The greatest single proportion of all respondents also regarded the ANC/IFP power struggle as the central cause of current violence.

Factor 2

Recurring cycles of rising expectations (mainly unrealistic against the background of prevailing realities in South Africa) especially among the black youth,[4] have led to serious levels of frustration, impatience and rebelliousness among the youth. In recent months (early 1993) frustration among the youth about what they feel is the far too slow pace towards the new South Africa has manifested itself time and again in revolts in areas such as Soweto and Sebokeng. This frustration and revolt is exacerbated because the youth, especially during the eighties, were the backbone of the struggle against apartheid and frequently took the lead in protest action. In the process they rejected the authority structures (including those of their parents). The formal negotiations now taking place among the older elite members of different political interest groups may well give rise to a perception among the youth that their sacrifices were in vain and that they are being sold out.

An extensive study among young people (15-24 years old) in the Greater Soweto area in 1991 (cf. De Kock & Schutte 1991) indicated that black youth cherished extremely high expectations of a new South Africa and that they believed that a government in a new South Africa could fulfil their expectations. To mention but one example: 62 per cent of the respondents among the youth indicated that they expected professional job opportunities in the new South Africa and 74 per cent indicated that the government and the private sector would provide these opportunities. The reality, according to economists, is that from now until the end of this century, at least 1 000 job opportunities will have to be created each day (note: not necessarily professional job opportunities!) otherwise the pool of unemployed will amount to between seven and eight million people by 1995. To create 1 000 job opportunities a day will mean that the economy will have to grow at 7 per cent a year — something that has not been achieved in the past 15 years. The question now arises what will happen to these rising expectations in the months after the outcome of the coming election?

Factor 3

In South Africa there is a *culture of violence, coercion and intolerance* (and this is confirmed by a whole series of surveys among all sectors of the population) while the culture of democracy, reciprocal persuasion and tolerance is still rather tenuous. The apartheid system was pre-eminently one of coercion and the reaction it elicited (especially the later stages of the reaction when the initial stages were met with coercion) was logically no less coercive or violent, for example the deadly 'necklace', the 'people's court' and terrorism in public places. The fact is that at present people believe that violence and coercion (coercion and violence are merely interchangeable terms) are useful and yield results. The question arises whether there is any possibility that people may assume in the period before the election and in the transitional period after it that, although violence and coercion might perhaps be useful in the short term, these methods would definitely not produce the kind of society that most people wanted. In other words, a society in which everyone could express himself and realise his or her full potential without fearing anyone else. A society that is 'born' of violence and therefore of coercion is usually a coercive society since those affected by coercion in this 'birth' will have to be kept in check by coercion. South Africa under apartheid was a good example of this phenomenon.

It can therefore be assumed that where the competition for political power will become increasingly intense in the ensuing months, people will be greatly inclined to take the useful, easy path of violence.

Factor 4

Poor central social control in real terms, or perceptions that there is poor central social control, or the unacceptability of central control may also encourage political violence. Within the scope of this contribution, it is unfortunately not possible to give more than a very synoptic review of this extremely important and highly complex factor, and of only two of the elements of central social control, namely the police and the penal system.

The police

The real situation is that the SA Police are understaffed, overworked and underpaid. Comparisons with international standards show this, but even these comparisons are not valid because it is often not taken into account that South Africa's situation in terms of the terrain, the vast areas involved and intensity of political violence and common-law crime cannot always be compared with international examples.

The perceptual situation is that surveys over the past three years have indicated that the majority of South Africans simply do not believe that the state, and specifically the SAP, is able to handle the current violence and guarantee their safety. Consequently they do not feel safe (more about this in factor 5). The recent study on hostel-township conflict showed, for example, that respectively 53 per cent and 56 per cent of the hostel dwellers and township dwellers believed that the SAP could not protect them against attack from the opposing side.

The acceptability/unacceptability/legitimacy question in respect of the SAP is particularly complex and cannot be discussed properly within the scope of a paragraph. The fact is that there is a considerable part of the community that does not accept the SAP as an impartial umpire and provider of security services to every member of the public. The reasons for this belief should be sought in

- the history of the SAP as the coercive arm of the apartheid state and as the enforcer of apartheid legislation;
- the struggle against apartheid that branded any association with the police (even the laying of a legitimate charge relating to a common-law crime) as an act of treason against the liberation struggle which could even be penalised with the 'necklace'. Alternative policing and penal systems were created that at least superficially seemed to function more effectively than the official police and penal system;
- the isolation of the police force. As a result of the onslaught against the SAP, members of the police force became increasingly isolated from the communities they served (people dissociated themselves from the police) and for their own safety they often had to take steps, for example the fortification of police stations and police residential areas, which removed them even further from the community.

This mixture of real understaffing and perceptions of ineffectuality and unacceptability of the police has most decidedly created a climate that breeds fear, a desire for self-protection and for 'taking the law into one's own hands'. It promotes political violence as well as common-law crime.

The penal system

Besides the SAP, there are also other instruments of central institutional control that, rightly or wrongly, do not inspire trust among the population. There are perceptions among the public that if someone is actually arrested for a crime or an act of political violence, one of the following is highly probable:

The perpetrator will be released immediately because of insufficient evidence.

The perpetrator will be released on bail and a lengthy court case will ensue.

The perpetrator will be found guilty, sentenced and sent to prison, but will serve only a short period of the sentence.

These perceptions — once again, rightly or wrongly —

- encourage a situation in which people are not prepared to come forward with information since this holds risks for the informant and his or her relatives. An excellent example of such lack of indispensable information concerns the violence on trains. Despite the offer of rewards of up to R70 000 for information leading to the arrest and conviction of the people responsible for the violence, no one has yet come forward with hard information. Furthermore this loss of faith in the penal system has led to a vicious circle of revenge and retaliation and of taking the law into one's own hands — 'I will personally get even with my brother's murderer or my wife's rapist and this person's family will in turn take revenge on me.'

Where there is a lack of central social control — even if this is only perceived as such — violence and intimidation (coercion), or common-law crime, are made all too easy. Indeed, they are not only easy, but also rewarding (see factor 3) and necessary to protect oneself (see factor 5). Given the forthcoming election the question could be asked whether confidence in the capabilities and neutrality of central social control can be restored before the election? Or whether alternative grassroots security structures, for example self-defence units (SDUs) and punishment, for example 'people's courts', could be integrated into the central social control in a system of community policing? If the reply to this question is no, the election will be held in unsafe conditions and this may lead to violence during the election (compare factor 5 here too) which could in turn lead to a serious questioning of the outcome of the election and the legitimacy of an interim government. Such questioning and low legitimacy in a situation in which every party and community has its own defence mechanism, does not augur well for the processes of restructuring, democratisation, development, reconciliation and nation-forming.

Factor 5

Surveys done by this division since February 1990 have shown a dramatic increase in the incidence of *feelings of fear, uncertainty and insecurity* among all parts of the South African population, but especially among people living in the conflict-torn areas of Natal and the Witwatersrand-Vaal area. Such feelings should be ascribed to the high frequency of incidents of violence in these areas and to the loss of confidence in central social control (see factor 4). The high levels of insecurity/fear give rise to a phenomenon which can be called violence dynamics. This is the phenomenon which, no matter what the origin of the violence was, later develops its own violence dynamics and creates a vicious circle resulting in the generation of further violence. Violence dynamics have been clearly identified with the hostel-township conflict and can be detailed as follows:[5]

- As a result of previous violence people feel that the environment is dangerous and unsafe (see Figure 7).
- These people have now also lost confidence in the SAP's neutrality and its ability to guarantee their safety (see Figures 8-9).
- This has made them feel even less safe. (Central social control helps the other side in the struggle.)
- They have therefore developed a need to arm themselves and to organise for self-defence (see Figures 10-11).
- They have acquired weapons and organised SDUs (see Figure 12).[6]
- After this, only the 'triggers' are needed to spark off the cycle of violence.

Unless the levels of violence are reduced dramatically before the coming election, the levels of fear, insecurity and uncertainty will remain high and the onset of violence dynamics will still remain a possibility.

'Trigger' factors

Although virtually any incident could trigger the explosive mixture described in the previous section, three factors in particular warrant careful consideration, namely:

- **Rumours**: In circumstances in which insecurity, fear and uncertainty are rife, people tend to believe any rumour and may mobilise on the basis of the rumour to launch pre-emptive attacks, which in turn lead to retaliatory attacks. (During the study on hostel-township violence the fieldwork team quite by chance came across two situations in which, within a few minutes, rumours had triggered pre-emptive attacks.)
- **Conspiracies (Third Forces)**: It is *at least theoretically* probable that at different levels and within different political interest groups in South Africa, there are people who believe that a new South Africa will not be to their advantage. These people also believe that large-scale violence and chaos will give them the opportunity of creating a South Africa that will suit them better. When there are high levels of insecurity, where self-defence mechanisms exist, where there is a lack of confidence in central social control, and there is intense political competition without proper game rules, even a 'one-person conspiracy' may spark off the fires of violence merely by spreading a single rumour. As the election approaches, conspiracies and potential conspiracies will come under increasing pressure to light the fire. If the conditions mentioned above were to be

removed to a great extent, they could not succeed in lighting the fires of violence.

- **Crowd dynamics**: People in crowds are exposed to crowd dynamics, which include the following: facelessness (people believe they are invisible to the maintainers of law and order, to their victims, or to the community, therefore they can act as they please); private de-individualisation (human behaviour is usually regulated by internalised behavioural rules and the social environment, but in unfamiliar situations or emotionally highly charged, volatile situations there is a possibility that people may not recall these behavioural rules and model the social environment); the pressure for conformity (in a crowd, people tend to conform to the majority, often for fear of what may happen to them if they do not); and physiological arousal (highly emotional people who are physiologically aroused may become aggressive). With an approaching election — which will historically be an extremely important and highly emotional one — it is logical that there will be gatherings and mass rallies. Under the circumstances in which there will be high levels of fear and uncertainty and in which people will look for explanations for their situation and try to find scapegoats, crowd behaviour at gatherings and rallies may well trigger violence.

Escalation and de-escalation factors

As mentioned in the first section (see Figures 1 and 2), although the incidence of violence has decreased over the past 18 months (September 1991 — March 1993), the ratio of death and injury to an incident has risen. The factors that have played the greatest part in this state of affairs are the sophistication of weapons and the organised way that the violence is orchestrated. Whereas the conflicts of August 1990 were characterised by groups of people armed with pangas, assegais and knobkieries who had to attack within striking or stabbing distance, incidents of violence today feature one or two attackers with some of the most sophisticated weapons available. From a safe distance they can kill or injure dozens of people. It is doubtful whether people will be less heavily armed or less well-organised before the election.

GUIDELINES FOR MANAGEMENT OF POLITICAL VIOLENCE

Given the limited space available for this contribution, the following *short-term* guidelines for the management of political violence up to, during and after the election of an interim government, can be briefly outlined without much definition and refining:

- A system of 'rumour-control centres' should be established as soon as possible — especially in areas with high levels of violence — and be linked to the Local Dispute Resolution Committees (LDRC's) and Regional Dispute Resolution Committees (RDRC's).
- Conspiracies should be continually and implacably investigated, exposed and prosecuted.
- Every effort should be made to thwart weapons smuggling, the possession of illegal arms and the manufacture of home-made weapons. Political organisations should reveal their weapons caches and the government should publicly destroy any weapons it has confiscated.
- Political parties should be encouraged and assisted to train 'marshalls' who could apply intra-crowd control at political gatherings and rallies.
- All armies of liberation movements and official armies (SADF and homeland armies) should be integrated and placed under multiparty control.
- The local defence mechanisms (for example the SDUs) should be depoliticised and decriminalised, converted to SPUs and integrated into the SAP as a basis for community policing.
- A gigantic, ongoing and systematic peace education programme for all the people of South Africa should be launched immediately. All educational institutions, mass media, churches and security forces should be involved in this programme. All political leaders and community leaders should regularly and jointly endorse this programme. Some of the elements that should be emphasised in such a programme are: the price of the *current violence*; the realisation of expectations; the disadvantages of coercion and the necessity for an optimum balance between freedom and order.
    - All parties and groupings should, as speedily as possible, draw up an unambiguous, clear and sanctionable code of political conduct which should also contain clear rules for the election campaign. The code of conduct should be strictly applied from the outset.

In terms of the sick patient analogy used earlier, if these short-term measures are immediately and earnestly applied, they ought to stabilise the patient's blood pressure, pulse and temperature sufficiently to ensure that he (South Africa) will survive the operation of restructuring, democratisation, development, reconciliation and nation-forming. The author wishes to reiterate that he does not advocate the postponement or cancellation of the operation, but instead that the operation and recovery of the patient should take place under the most favourable conditions possible. If it seems impossible to apply these guidelines, the operation will still inevitably be carried out — but at high risk.

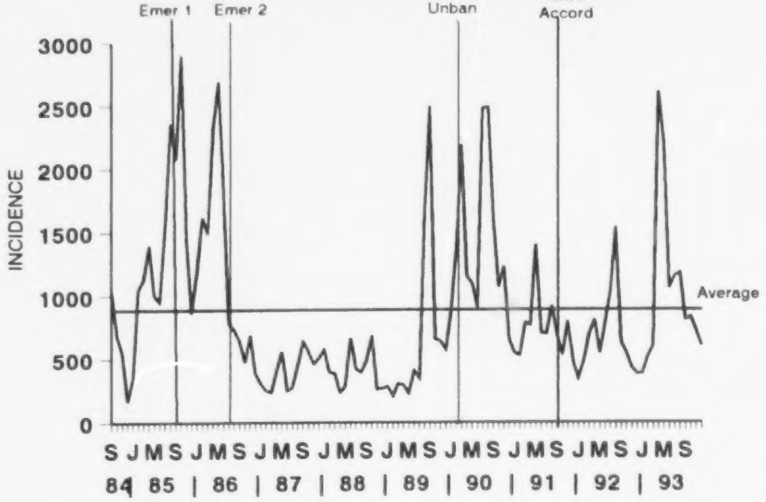


Figure 1 Monthly unrest-related incidence: September 1984 to December 1993

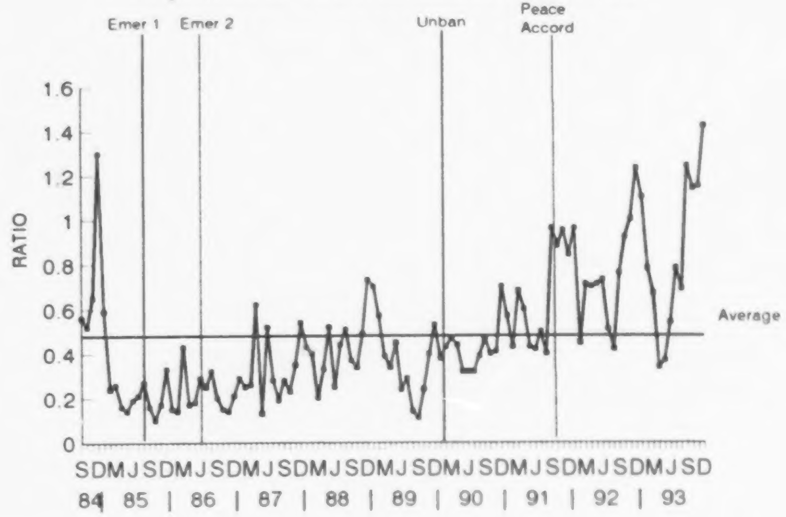


Figure 2 Ratio of deaths and injuries per violent incident: September 1984 to December 1993

Figure 3 Party support; township environment

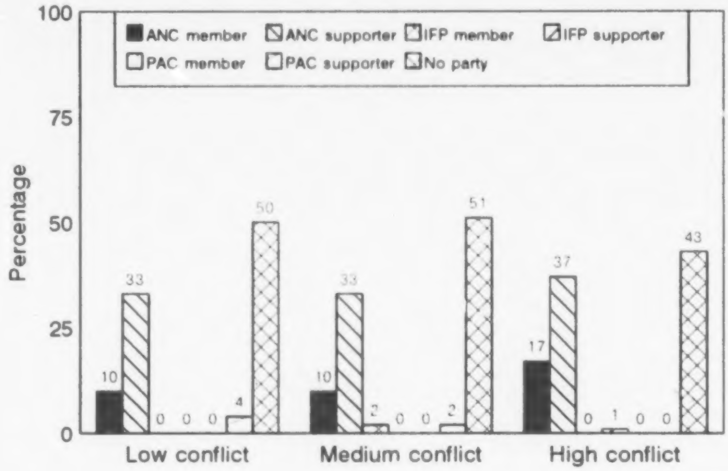


Figure 4 Party support; hostels

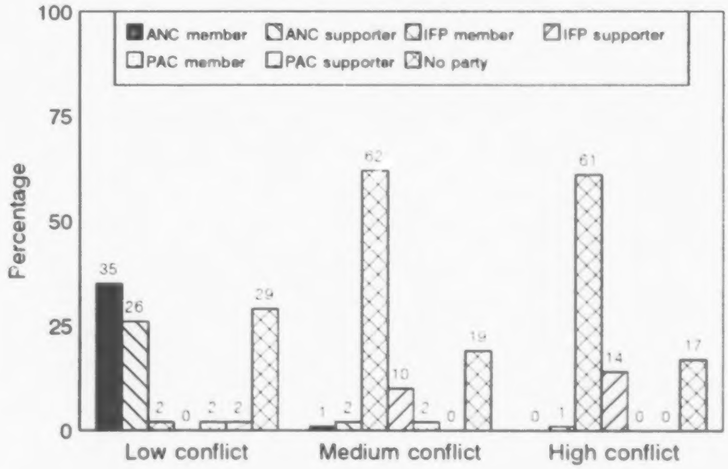


Figure 5 ANC wants to close hostels; hostel residents

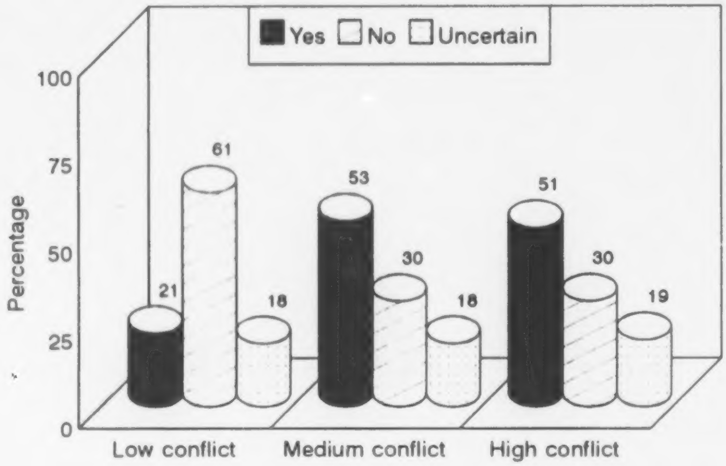


Figure 6 ANC wants to close hostels; township ANC supporters

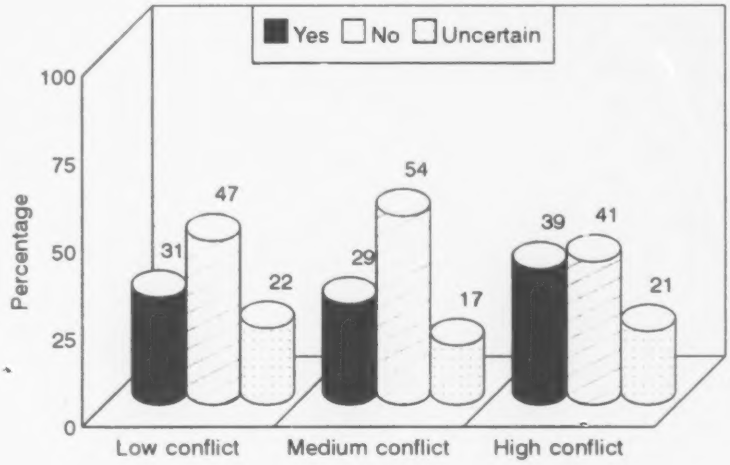


Figure 7 Dangerous to very dangerous

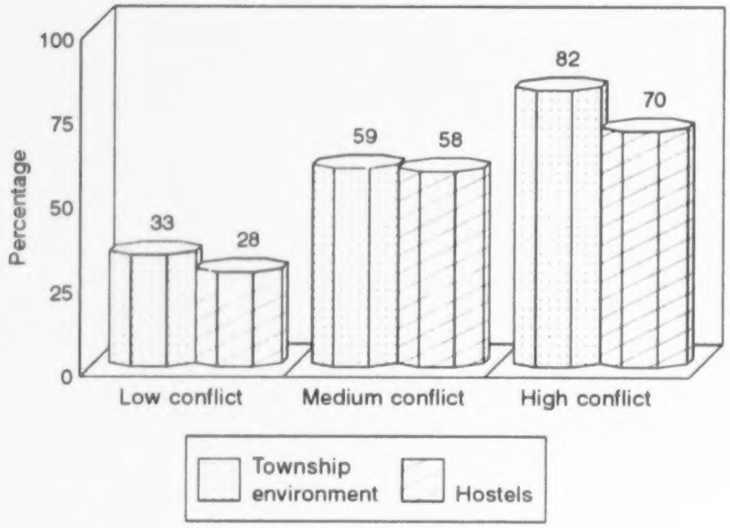
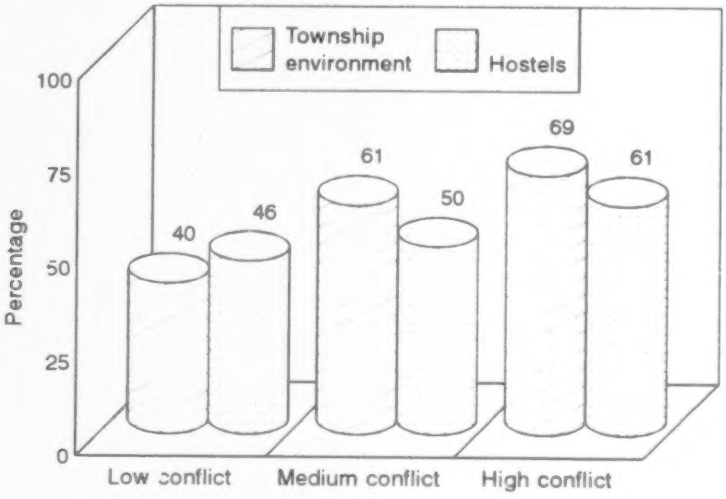


Figure 8 No confidence in SAP capability



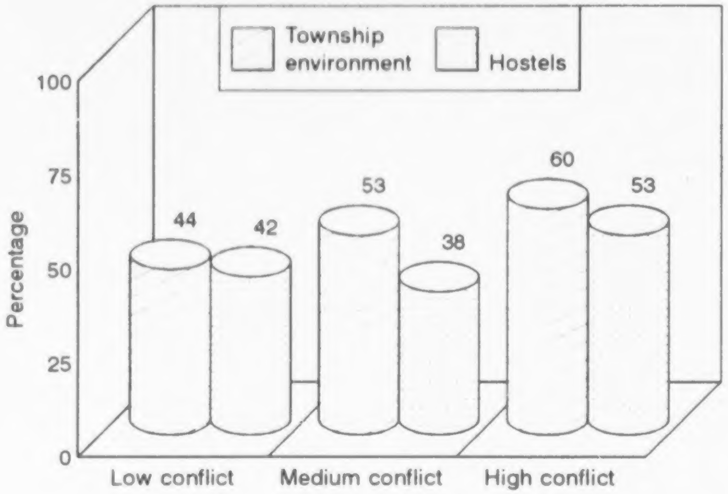


Figure 9 SAP not neutral

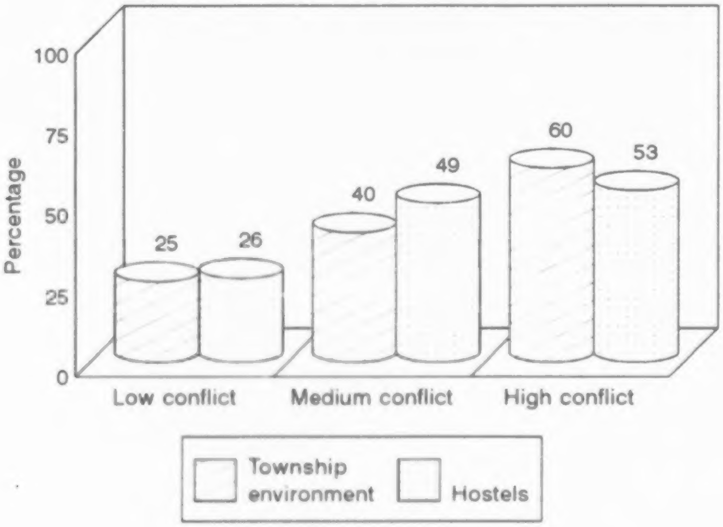


Figure 10 Need to carry arms

Figure 11 Need to organise themselves; township environment

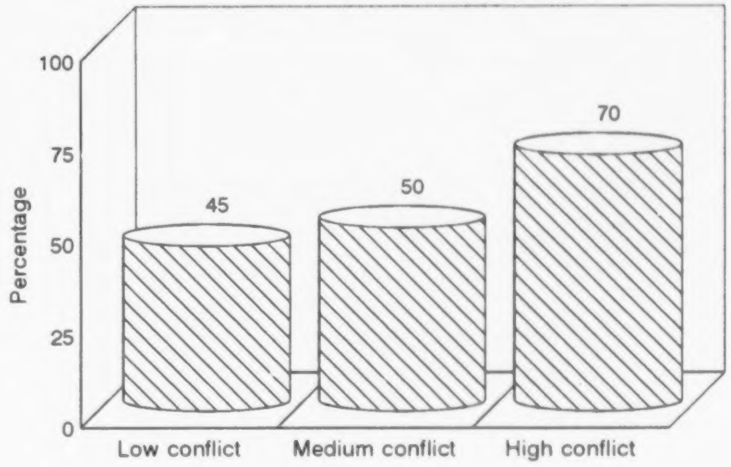
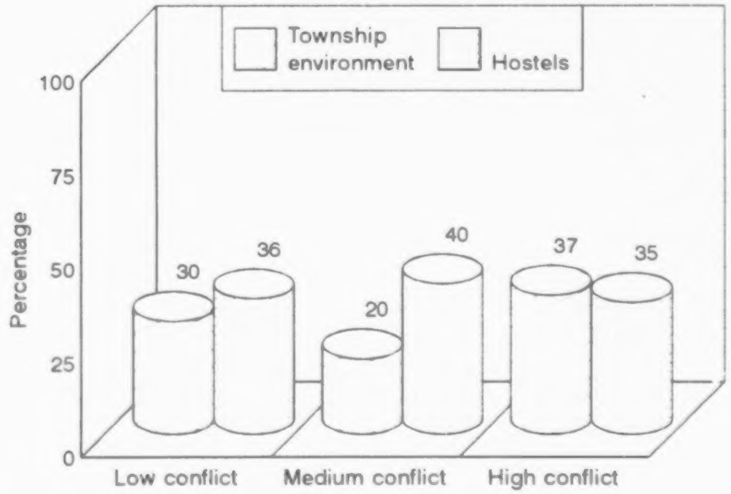


Figure 12 There is an SDU



NOTES

1. The author was on the horns of a similar dilemma while giving expert testimony before the Tokoza Committee of the Goldstone Commission.
2. At present attempts are being made to provide informal settlements and townships with infrastructural services, to upgrade the hostels, to build schools and to upgrade stations. In many cases the prevailing violence has restricted these attempts.
3. The author does not wish to state that the National Peace Accord and its ensuing structures produced no fruitful results whatsoever. For example, it is quite possible that the levels of violence might have been higher had there not been a Peace Accord and peace structures.
4. It should be borne in mind here that 44 per cent of the total South African population is black and is aged 24 years and younger.
5. The study on hostel-township conflict will be used here as an illustration. In all the figures reference is made to low, medium and high conflict hostels and hostel environments. This classification of 22 hostels with 783 respondents and of 29 hostel environments with 736 respondents, is based on their responses to questions on: intimidation, violence, ridicule, attacks on hostels and hostel environments, fellow-residents killed and the respondents' description of the hostels or hostel environments as dangerous or less dangerous.
6. Two questions about weapens had to be removed from the questionnaire after the first day of the field work because the field-workers' lives were threatened and the questions about SDUs elicited doubtful responses.

REFERENCES

DE KOCK, C. P. & SCHUTTE, C. D. 1991. (eds). *'Lost generation' or 'dynamics of a new South Africa'? An investigation into the life-circumstances of African youth in the PWV region.* Pretoria: Human Sciences Research Council.

DE KOCK, C. P. 1992a. *Dynamics of the present political violence and suggested solutions.* Paper delivered at the International Conference on Multicultural Conflict Management in Changing Societies, 26-28 August 1992. Johannesburg.

DE KOCK, C. P. 1992b. Ekspertgetuienis van Chris Paul De Kock oor die agtergrond en dinamika van sewe insidente van openbare geweld in Tokoza tussen September 1991 en April 1992 voor die Kommissie van Ondersoek insake die voorkoming van openbare geweld en intimidasie se Tokoza-komitee onder voorsitterskap van advokaat M. N. S. Sithole (opgeneem in Tokoza-oorkonde).

DE KOCK, C. P., MAREKA, C., RHOODIE, N. J. & SCHUTTE, C. D. 1993. *The prospects for a free, democratic election.* Pretoria: Human Sciences Research Council.

DE KOCK, C. P., SCHUTTE, C. D., RHOODIE, N. J. & EHLERS, D. 1993. A quantitative analysis of some possible explanations for the hostel-township violence. In: MINNAAR, A. (ed.), *Communities in isolation: perspectives on hostels in South Africa.* Pretoria: Human Sciences Research Council.

GOLDSTONE, R. J. 1992. *Verslag van die komitee van ondersoek na die verskynsel en oorsake van geweld in die Tokoza-gebied.* Pretoria: Goldstone-Kommissie (17 November).

CHAPTER 36

The myth of black-on-black violence

Fatima Meer

We are a society brutalised by apartheid: this is the central fact of our existence and of the violence that threatens to abort our democracy. Yet there is a strong tendency to place our ongoing violence outside the context of apartheid, to explain it as a 'horizontal' struggle for power, to see it as an ahistorical 'post-apartheid', post-1990 phenomenon for which the blame lies with blacks thereby discounting the past, exonerating the state, and underplaying the hand of the security forces. This attitude was typified by Mr De Klerk when he said at Codesa: 'If your leaders talk to each other there is no need for you to kill each other. So let us stop the violence.'

Dr Chris de Kock (see Chapter 35) may concede the 'historical injustices of colonialism and apartheid', but he barely departs from the De Klerk position when he holds that the government has dropped apartheid and is negotiating a revolutionary restructuring of the South African society, but that violence is jeopardising the transition. Violence can be a culprit in itself, only if the government and the legacy of apartheid can be excluded from it.

Because crime is concentrated among the poor does not mean that the poor are responsible for crime; it means that they are more exposed to factors which generate crime. Similarly, if political violence is concentrated among blacks, it is not because blacks generate it, but because blacks are exposed to factors that do. And the factors are both structural and psychological, both social and personal, the two are interdependent. Above all, they are embedded in history and that history stubbornly clings to us and influences our present and our future.

BLACK POLITICAL RESISTANCE BEFORE 1960

Prior to the splitting of the country into tribal homelands, before 1960, and the banning of the ANC, there was no horizontal competition for political power among the disenfranchised. There was resistance to racism, there were differences of opinions about strategies and ideologies, but these were not manifested in a power struggle for territory and membership or for votes. The competition was for ideas, and though this was often manifested in intellectual conflict — the most acrimonious being between Leninists and Trotskyites — there was, in general, an acceptance of democratic coexistence, and mutual respect. There was no question of the one aiming at annihilating the other. The pre-apartheid racists did not divide the black people among themselves. They identified a two-class or two-race country, white and non-white, European and non-European, thereby putting all the disenfranchised, African, Indian and coloured, in the same train compartments and bus seats, the same queues and the same residential areas.

The apartheid government separated the disenfranchised into discrete tribal and ethnic groups and forced each under its own coopted, black administration. At that level, the colour of those who administered them was irrelevant, just as the colour of the police who accosted and shot black people was irrelevant. They were part of the system. Resistance against the homelands, homeland governments, and homeland political parties fell into the same category as resistance to township councils.

STRUCTURAL VIOLENCE

Violence in general is rooted in the inequitable distribution of resources, in material inequalities. The state promulgates laws to serve the proprietary and property rights of those possessing such rights. State law can apply equally to citizens only to the extent that such rights are more or less equally distributed among them. The greater the discrepancy in the distribution of such rights, the greater the inequality and the violence contingent on such inequality. The law is partial to the interests of the class or race, or class/race in power and since the empowered class is always a small minority, it is answerable to a minority. This results in the under-representation of the majority and even its dispossession, particularly if it is distinguishable by race. Dispossession is in itself violence. So long as the dispossessed accept their dispossession as their inevitable lot or destiny, and remain respectful of the ruling class and their laws, that class will not use its formal violence against it, but once they question the legitimacy of their dispossession, and strain against it, the rulers, whose vested interests are threatened, will use the state apparatus to suppress them and structural violence will be compounded by military and police violence, overt and covert. This has been the South African situation in which black people have been brutalised by both structural and formal violence and their reaction to such brutalisation has exacerbated the prevailing violence. The root cause of the violence of the underclass is aptly described in the following words:

> The feelings of the sinking class, the anger, dismay and despair with which it watched the going out of all of warm comfort and light of life, scarcely stir the surface of history. The upper classes have told us what the poor ought to have thought of those vicissitudes; religion, philosophy, and political economy were ready with alleviations and explanations which seemed singularly helpful and convincing to the rich. The voice of the poor themselves does not come to our ears. This great population seems to resemble nature and to bear all the storms that beat upon it with a strange silence and resignation. But just as nature has her own power of protest in some sudden upheaval, so this world of men and women — an underground world as we trace the distance that voices have to travel to reach us — has a volcanic character of its own, and it is only by some volcanic surprise that it can speak the language of remonstrance or penance or prayer, or place on record its consciousness of wrong (J. L. & Barbara Hammond, *The village labour*, London, Longmans, 1969: 241-242).

The wrong is the root of violence and when consciousness of that wrong is aroused, it demands a restitution which is nothing less than the return of the self to itself. There is nothing more devastating than the realisation that not only has one been reduced to nothingness, but that one has accepted and collaborated in the reduction of one's nothingness. When that realisation comes in isolation and remains individuated, it could result in a despair so overpowering as to be self-destructive. But when it comes in unison, in a simultaneous rousing of individual consciences, it has the capacity to ignite the force of human liberation.

Gandhi understood this force, moralised it as soul force, and mobilised it into a power that changed the definition of the Indian people in South Africa at the turn of the century, and earned the people of India their independence about the middle of this century. The distinctive feature of the Gandhian movement is that it integrates the personal and structural factors in political protest. Thus in mobilising the Indian people against the carrying of passes in the Transvaal in 1908 he searched out the individual in the mass and exhorted: 'A pledge cannot be taken as a body, it must be taken individually.' Indeed a mass cannot commit itself, it cannot think or act. It is individuals within the mass who do these things and it is individuals who are punished in the courts of law, for violence committed *en masse*.

STRUCTURAL AND PERSONAL VIOLENCE

While violence has its roots in the structural arrangements of society, it is people who are slotted into those structural tiers. The suffering is at the personal level, the collective being an aggregation of the personal.

Yet there is a tendency among some social scientists to reify the collective, to see it as something distinct and different from the individual, to isolate the instrumentality of the individual in political violence and see it in sheer structural or group terms, as manifestations of class, race or ethnicity, as originating in the mass, as mass psychology. This is to take the Durkheimian view of the collective conscience, derived from the individual but assuming its own independent identity, and a power that is greater than the total of its constituent parts. Mass violence is thus seen as distinct and different from individual violence, as having its own capacity, its own responsibility, and solutions are sought, not in the individual, but in the 'mass'.

The fact that the perpetrators of political violence in South Africa remain largely unknown, descending phantom-like on their preys, fosters the sense of an inscrutable, inaccessible outside force beyond the individual. In the apartheid context, it also helps to 'racialise' violence and to exonerate the police from pursuing the violators. If the perpetrator is a 'race' and not an individual, what can the police do in the matter? How can it arrest a race? The responsibility is pushed on the race to sort itself out. Yet the generating force in violence is derived from the sense of personal loss and personal pain: before it assumes the dimension of a social problem, the experience is intensely personal.

If political violence is perceived both in personal and group terms, then its elimination will also be sought in dual terms, both in personal and group therapy. Unfortunately, recipes for political peace-keeping generally overlook the personal aspect, the personal pain, the personal provocation for personal retribution, the moral outrage on a personal level. There is little appeal to the individual conscience, the source that discriminates between right and wrong, justice and injustice and little, if any attempt, to heal personal wounds, restitute personal justice. That, after all, is the feeling core and if there is no redress at that level, there cannot be any at the group or factional level.

In our clinical approach to problems we tend to concentrate too much on the 'social' — which is after all an amorphous abstraction — and lose the personal. In Natal, violence has continued unabated for nine years; the South African death toll through political violence during that period is estimated to be 15 000. What has happened to the families of those 15 000 victims? Beyond the initial crisis support that some received through voluntary organisations, they were left to their own resources, to lick their wounds and work up colossal resentments. The government provided no support system; the negotiation process set up numerous talk-shops between leaders of instigated factions whose instrumentality stopped at organising revenge, and developed no means to address the basic problems provoking violence, problems of accessing essential commodities.

In semi-rural Inanda in 1985, the commodity was land, earmarked for release to Africans in terms of the 1930 Land Act, but never released. The violence was racialised because the authorities blamed the Indians, who were also suffering from land hunger, for resisting the forced sale imposed upon them. In Umbumbulu the scarce commodity was jobs and the violence was tribalised because the homeland system inculcated the perception that jobs in the cities which bordered the homelands were tribally demarcated. Thus, suffering massive unemployment, Zulus considered jobs in the Durban region as their preserve and attacked Pondos. Had there been full employment and no material problems, the area would not have been vulnerable to violence, a 100 lives would not have been lost in a few weeks, and 10 000 houses would not have been burned. Violence cannot be expected to abate until basic needs are met.

But this is a long-term solution. What of the immediate violence where blacks are killing blacks? On Saturday, 22 May 1993, ANC demonstrators marched past a hostel and there was a clash. Police stated they tried to counsel and control but neither their advice nor attempt at discipline was heeded. But how could it have been when the proximate genesis of that violence lay in the institution of migrant labourers and hostels, and in white fears about a non-racial democracy?

THE HOSTELS

In the post-1990 violence, the hostels have emerged as the prime launching pads of armed attacks on townships, more specifically on squatter camps and on commuters on trains on the Reef. The vulnerability of the hostel dwellers to be instrumentalised in such a way is traced to their structuring as migrant labourers in apartheid society. Funnelled in from the rural areas to the urban at the behest of employers' needs, they remain largely isolated in single-sex hostels and, very marginally integrated into urban life or even the urban townships, they remain rooted to their clan solidarities, vulnerable to negative stereotyping of other clan solidarities and easily mobilised against them. Concentrated in large numbers in small physical spaces, they are also highly vulnerable to rumours and to instant mobilisation into gangs and impis. The state has taken advantage of this and on the Reef it is in the hostels, above all, that the cause of the hirer becomes transformed into the cause of the hired.

WHITE FEARS AND BLACK VIOLENCE

The announcement by the apartheid state in 1990 that it would abandon racism was followed by an escalation in violence, and *that* violence is directly linked to *that* announcement, for it raised expectations which the Nationalists were not ready to fulfil. Whilst proclaiming the demise of racism, they struggled to restitute their racial powers, overtly through negotiation, and covertly through diminishing the power of the ANC. The violence did not escalate because the ANC and other banned organisations were unbanned or because life-term political prisoners were released. For the vast majority of black South Africans, these were signs of hope, signs of their liberation, and therefore occasions for celebration. The violence escalated because of the deliberate hand of the security forces, and this has been reliably established.

The so-called black-on-black violence is the manipulation of blacks against themselves to retain white power. The fact is that it is not blacks who are instigating violence against blacks, but it is the racists who are doing so in a desperate bid to hold on to their dying power. That despair is reflected in the activities of the Civil Co-operation Bureau (CCB), established to eliminate government opponents, and in the funding in Port Elizabeth of UmaAfrika by the SADF to the tune of R64 645 for the express purpose of creating conflict between Azapo/PAC and ANC/UDF, to list some instances.

In South Africa blacks have been and continue to be the main victims of violence in all its manifestations, criminal and political. It is mostly black women who are raped, usually by black men; the highest rate of murder is among blacks and it is usually blacks who kill blacks. Such violence has never been referred to as black-on-black violence; it is political violence that has earned that term, and that too, since 1990.

'Political violence', of the same genera as we experience today in black communities, has been a chronic feature of our society since at least the mid-1980s. It was then seen as law enforcement (because the law appeared to be firmly entrenched in white hands). The state and to a considerable extent the media, boldly projected blacks who helped to suppress black resistance as acting legitimately to maintain law and order. In the mid-eighties the state saw itself as confronted by a revolution and in need of countering that revolution. A State Intelligence source put the government's position crisply when he stated: 'There is a revolutionary assault going on out there. We have no instant counter-revolutionary force' (Eugene Terreblanche, *Sunday Times*, 14 July 1985).

The revolutionary assault was the resistance mobilised by civil rights organisations against escalating rent and transport costs, these being state monopolies. The counter-revolutionary force began to be provided by the township councillors and homeland governments. They were seen by the people as the coopted black arms of the white government; any clash with them was perceived as a clash with the white system regardless of the colour of the incumbents. The councillors, fearful of the civics, engaged private guards, or armies — 'amabutho' — to protect themselves. The clashes between these 'armies' and the township residents began to be referred to as black-on-black violence when in reality it was a confrontation between the people and the system.

CHIEF BUTHELEZI AND INKATHA

This so-called black-on-black violence was compounded with the co-optation of Inkatha as a major counterrevolutionary force. Inkatha was not co-opted into the system in the same way as management committees. In a sense, Inkatha and the National Party found each other in a time of mutual vulnerability to the UDF undergirded by the ANC.

Starting out as a popular leader with ANC links, Chief Buthelezi lost practically all credibility as a leader of the anti-apartheid movement by the mid nineteen-eighties and his KwaZulu administration was seriously challenged by the same elements that threatened the Nationalist government: the youth, UDF and the trade union federation, Fosatu, (later Cosatu). Buthelezi needed to maintain control and regain lost support, and collaboration with the government offered one solution. While there appeared to be a partnership between Inkatha and the government, it always remained problematic whether Inkatha ever pursued its own independent interests, being dependent on KwaZulu institutions and services for its organisation and the KwaZulu administration, in turn, being dependent on the Nationalist government for its budget. This dependency questions Inkatha's image as an independent black organisation competing with other black organisations in a horizontal struggle for power. On the other hand, the National Party government's initiatives in training Inkatha cadres in its military camps, in funding Inkatha rallies and the Inkatha-linked trade union Uwusa, confirm its use of Inkatha to promote its own interests. The government's present sidelining of Inkatha in favour of the ANC, which it now sees as its more realistic ally, reinforces this perception.

The state's manipulations in fomenting violence, although secretive, have been flagrant, as was established by the *Weekly Mail*'s publication of a memorandum sent by Major Botha to his senior, stating that 'it was of cardinal importance that arrangements were made for a massive turnout at an Inkatha rally to show everyone that he (Buthelezi) had a strong following ... it is recommended that a clandestine grant of at least R120 000 be made available for this purpose' (19-25/06/91). Although the rally itself was a failure, it provoked some of the worse violence in the region up to that time as a direct result of the government's bid to foster a counterrevolution.

The Trust Feed massacre in December 1988 is a spine-chilling example of the extremes to which the state has gone in its pursuit to retain power. The fundamental issue at Trust Feed was land. The apartheid state demarcated what land blacks should have and where. In effect, it restricted black land rights to such an extent that literally millions of blacks were forced off their land. This is history, but must not simply be dismissed as such, as if no longer of consequence. It is a matter for restitution and justice by the new government if there is to be any healing of institutionally inflicted wounds.

Trust Feed in the New Hanover district of the Natal Midlands was declared a black spot in a white area and in terms of that declaration the rightful owners of the land, who had lived there in peace and amicability for generations, were ordered to leave their land, because they were black and as such were intruding in an area where most of the landowners were white. Though a gross violation of a fundamental human right — the right to land — and a flagrant injustice, it was the 'law' of the apartheid state and South Africans were bound by it. The people resisted as any decent-minded people would have, as their scriptures, and their age-old mores required them to, and formed an anti-removal crisis committee. The apartheid state, through the agency of its local official, a Captain Mitchell, instigated the formation of an Inkatha committee in opposition to the Crisis Committee and launched a major Inkatha recruitment drive. Suddenly the area was inflamed with political divisions between Inkatha and the UDF. There is no evidence here of a horizontal competition for power between opposing political factions — in fact there is no evidence of any political consciousness of oppositional political 'parties' in the minds of the people before Captain Mitchell's interference, and before the people were confronted with forced removals which challenged their very right to material existence. The point to emphasise is that had the state not violated their most fundamental human right, the traditional tranquility of the people would not have been destroyed. Suddenly there was murder in their midst: unknown men attacked and killed four members of the Crisis Committee; four days later, eleven people were massacred.

In this instance, structural violence did not remain restricted to the source of the problem forced removal; nor was it restricted to instigating Inkatha against the Anti-Removal Crisis Committee. The state dipped its hand in blood, as its police murdered in their efforts to dislodge the 'revolution', deemed to be led by the UDF and associated organisations. The police, in disguise, led by Captain Mitchell, attacked a funeral vigil on house TF83 and were directly responsible for the massacre of the eleven people. In one of the rare instances in which the murderers were tracked down, Captain Mitchell was sentenced to death eleven times and his associated police to various terms of imprisonment. Captain Mitchell was not acting on his own behalf or from personal animosity; he was carrying out his 'duties' in an officially designated campaign to cleanse the area of the 'revolutionaries' — who were deemed to be linked to the UDF and the Anti-Removal Crisis Committee — and to install the 'counter-revolutionary' unit (identified by the state as Inkatha) in total control. To give the police a free hand and thwart all resistance, UDF-supporting youth were detained just before the massacre, and residents were warned off the roads through a loudspeaker (the Codesa File, Dr Paulus Zulu, p. 218).

The trial itself was difficult because of attempts by the police to cover their tracks which resulted in the judge remarking, 'a distressing feature of the case is that as the evidence went on, it became clear that the evidence of senior police officers could not be accepted and that official records produced from the files were also subject to suspicion or shown to be completely inaccurate' (The Trust Feed Trial: Summary of the Proceedings: 4417).

Once unleashed, such insidious violence, is very difficult to rein in, for it rebounds on the manipulated (or mercenaries) who make it their own cause, it factionalises communities and forces them into warring groups with their own motives and passions, and it breeds political intolerance.

Not only has the state succeeded in unleashing violence so that from the security forces killing the people, the people are killing each other — but it has tribalised and racialised the violence, as when Zulus attacked Pondos and Indians in the Durban region, thereby creating intertribal, inter-race tensions.

Chief Buthelezi and Inkatha have their legitimate aspirations, but they would not have embarked on the violence they have without the goading, the assisting and the manipulating by the state in its desperate bid to organise a counterrevolution. Those attacked would then not have retaliated in the way they have, resulting in the present proliferation of blood letting. What has significantly influenced the state of the present violence is that the government, which in the past controlled the country's artillery so that it held a virtual monopoly over lethal weapons, lost that monopoly when it began assisting mercenaries and armies in neighbouring states in pursuit of its counter-revolutionary efforts. The guns it distributed willy-nilly have returned to be used in our country, and this largely accounts for both the escalation of casualties in the post-1990 violence and the apparent anonymity of the attackers.

In the days when apartheid ruled almost without apparent challenge, there was a brand of Euro-American visitor who warned that the Afrikaner would never give up control and, if pushed against the wall, would destroy the country first. That the Afrikaner probably suffers from some such self-immolative tendency appears to be reflected in the spate of family murders in recent times. However, departing colonial governments have been known to bankrupt state coffers and ruin the economy out of sheer spite, so that new governments would inherit destroyed societies and have no more joy in governing them than the old governments had in their twilight years.

Unlike the departing colonial governments, the Nationalists are here to stay and, after two years of negotiations with the ANC, they have discovered that the ANC are not the monsters they had made them out to be, that the Afrikaner and the African can actually work together and that the ANC is prepared to share the government with them. But the realisation has come too late. The government can do very little to rescue the country from the violence it has unleashed, and to demand that those it instigated against each other, Inkatha and the ANC, should do so, is sheer impertinence. ANC and Inkatha are not in control and, until they are, there is little they can do in the matter.

For the long-term solution, violence will be exorcised from our society only when we have a political structure capable of fulfilling the people's primary needs and eliminating poverty.

The people's needs in the meanwhile have grown to overwhelming proportions — their need for housing — a third of our urban African people are living in 'mjondolos' (so-called informal settlements) under constant threat of removal; the school system continues to be grossly disparate with a fraction of African pupils reaching matric and our unemployment rate is soaring with half of our African youth unable to find employment. The vast majority of our people have no training and therefore no hope for an improved future. One can go on listing the structural violence that is set to continue even with a new government and, given the rising expectations of the deprived, in particular, from a Mandela-led government, disappointment can set off new protests, new violence.

The right to a vote becomes meaningless without a right to a home, a job and a secure family life. A group of women in a Durban 'mjondolo' expressed their expectations from 'Mandela's government'. It would give them houses, medical care, jobs, bring them food to their doorsteps and, above all, rescue their children from the drudgery of unskilled labour which had been their lot in life. Their expectations are high, from their present stance, and if a new government cannot meet them even part of the way, there will be new anger.

To put out the immediate fire, we need fire fighters and not fire lighters; we need a peace-keeping force which, from the centre of command, to every man on the job, is responsible to the people in need of protection. This can be accomplished only through a drastic reorganisation and re-education of the security forces and through a substantial augmentation of its members, so that every village, every shack in danger of attack, is adequately protected. Drastic measures should be taken to bring in the guns that contribute to the prevailing trigger madness, and facilitate killing with less risk of accountability. Some system of reparation for loss of lives and property should be instituted to alleviate the anger and pain of those despoiled and thereby de-escalate the spiral of revenge. Most importantly, urgent work must begin to empower the powerless.

All this can be done only by a new democratic government responsible to the people and sensitive to their needs.

CHAPTER 37

Violence and nation-building in South Africa

Jacklyn Cock

INTRODUCTION

Much of the political violence in contemporary South Africa is a reflection of the ideology of militarism which is so pervasive in our society. The core of this set of ideas is the notion that violence is a legitimate solution to conflict. Many young people have been brutalised by their acceptance of this notion, and by crude, stereotypical notions of 'the enemy'. Between 1976 and 1990 many young South Africans defined themselves as soldiers fighting a 'war'. Thousands of these young people have been scarred by their experience of violent conflict in the townships, in Angola or in Namibia.

An important task which now confronts us is to heal these wounds of war and to integrate all young South Africans into a common and peaceful society. A system of non-military community service could provide such a healing function. It could break the ideology of militarism and operate as an expression of *reconciliation* and reconstruction throughout the region. A system of community service could include activities such as fighting crime, repairing township schools, building parks, providing health care, giving assistance to the disabled and elderly, childcare, teaching, literacy education, housing construction, conservation of natural resources, disaster relief, and agriculture. Such activities could be an effective way of getting very different young South Africans to invest their energies and unite in a common and peaceful cause. As such, community service could be an important nation-building institution.

THE CASE FOR COMMUNITY SERVICE

- It would be an integrating force in our balkanised nation, providing a sense of shared purpose and social cohesion.
- It would combat the current mood of national drift — the tendency for the fabric of South African society to unravel.
- It would promote tolerance and cultural integration. Margaret Mead suggested that universal national service would compensate young people for increasing fragmentation, ignorance, and lack of knowledge of their fellow citizen. Cultural integration has been the primary purpose of national service in Canada, Indonesia and Nigeria.
- It would, as in the case of the Nigerian National Youth Service Corps, become a primary vehicle for promoting national unity. As in Nigeria in the aftermath of violent conflict, we need ways of acquainting South Africans of diverse backgrounds with one another, so promoting national integration and building a 'common patriotism'.
- If community service took the form of a 'civilian GI Bill' which offered young South Africans scholarships in return for community service, it would be a democratising force which promoted opportunities for disadvantaged groups, and — specifically — provided more equitable access to higher education.
- Linking government benefits to service would foster a new understanding of the responsibilities of citizenship. It would instil in the youth the value of discipline, responsibility and civil obligation.
- A form of civilian community service could be linked to a system of volunteer or part-time military service akin to that of the British Territorial Army or the American National Guard.
- It would become a problem-solving resource that addressed some of our urgent social needs. National service volunteers could be put to work in a variety of ways in the war against poverty and pollution.
- It would serve as an alternative to the military and as a route to social mobility.
- It would promote personal development and maturity.
- There is a good deal of support for the notion in both local and international terms. The consensus of 30 national service leaders from around the world who gathered in the USA in June 1992 was that youth is an opportunity, not a problem: this is the premise on which the building blocks of national youth service should rest. Furthermore, the notion is high on President Clinton's agenda. The rationale behind the notion is service in return for the privilege of receiving a post-secondary education. 'The prototype, for national service is the World War II era GI Bill of Rights.' (Kolderie *et al.* 1992:144). 'Like its namesake, the new GI Bill would guarantee access to college or post-secondary training for all Americans willing to serve their country. Only, instead of limiting GI

education benefits to military veterans, it would mobilise a new 'Citizens Corps' of civilian volunteers to tackle America's most stubborn domestic and social problems' (Kolderie *et al.* 1992:143). It is intended that 'eventually voluntary national service should replace economic need as the basis on which the federal government delivers assistance to students' (Kolderie *et al.* 1992:13).

- It would alleviate the high level of unemployment among our youth. It is estimated that less than 12,5 per cent of school leavers find employment in the formal sector. Both Cosatu and Bankorp recently proposed the establishment of special employment programmes to address this problem. Cosatu suggested a Special Youth Programme as the central focus of a job-creation scheme. The programme would be voluntary, non-militarised, and it would focus on young people in the 17-25 age group and provide a basic level of subsistence — R30 a day, or less. It would meet the needs of communities in that it would provide for the construction of houses, schools, and clinics, etc. There was also an emphasis on on-the-job training so that participation in the programme would lead to employment. The Bankorp proposal is similar, and Richer points out that both of these youth-focused schemes lend themselves to the development of national community service schemes:

> The youth service options — common in many respects to both the Cosatu and Bankorp proposals — if aimed at the 300 000 unemployed school leavers each year, would provide a scheme both manageable and affordable. It would, by combining both training and work experience, provide the confidence-building and empowering boost many unemployed youths require, while building a foundation for overcoming skills shortages in the early periods of economic growth (Richer, 1992:52).

  Youth service could also be linked to a labour-intensive public works programme — a programme that has the support of the National Economic Forum in which the representatives of labour, capital and government meet.

- The notion has an indigenous flavour, as a variety of national service schemes have been tried in different African countries. For example: Botswana's *Tirelo ya Setshaba* scheme of community youth service took on male and female school leavers for one year's service — usually teaching in rural primary schools. The programme was non-compulsory, but participation was an important criterion for selection for tertiary education and public service employment.
- The scheme would become part of the conversion of military resources to productive purposes. For example, the existing infrastructure of the SADF could be used to accommodate, transport and train the youth. It has been pointed out that the SADF has a considerable non-military training capacity:

> The South African military provides training to its personnel in wide-ranging fields from catering to carpentry, air traffic control to graphic art. It provides training for drivers of personal vehicles, heavy duty vehicles, buses and heavy earth-moving equipment and every year it trains large numbers of its own paramedical personnel ... if this training were to be coordinated with technical training at school level and tertiary technical education, the national service training could effectively become a composite element in the skill upgrading of the youth (Richer 1992:50).

- If linked to university loans, a civilian national service would stimulate the desire for education.
- It would provide what William James calls for, a 'moral equivalent of war'. James sees national service as an alternative to the military that would impart the same heroic and noble qualities that he associates with warfare. It means community service that involves social innovation on a large scale, 'a set of social goals and ways of organizing for them that can evoke the excitement and popular allegiance that had long been associated with politically popular military operations' (Melman 1988:84).

A statement made by the ANC on the occasion of its 81st anniversary on 8 January 1993 reads:

> We are in the midst of the process of building a nation ... overcoming the divisive heritage of the past will require a conscious effort to promote institutions and practices which (will) create the conditions in which we all learn to treat our language, culture and religions with equal respect and dignity based on a common patriotism.

Civilian community service is an institution which would create this common patriotism, this cement which will bind a nation at peace with itself.

REFERENCES

DANZIG, R. & SZANTON, P. 1986. *National service. What would it mean?* Lexington, Mass.: D.C. Publisher.

EBERLY, D. & SHERRADEN, M. (eds). 1990. *The moral equivalent of war? A study of non-military service in nine nations.* New York: Greenwood Press.

JANOWITZ, M. 1983. *The reconstruction of patriotism. Education for civil consciousness.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

KOLDERIE, T. *et al.* 1992. Educating America: a new compact for opportunity and citizenship. In: MARSHALL, W. & SCHRAM, M. *Mandate for change.* Washington: The Progressive Policy Institute.

MELMAN, S. 1988. *Demilitarized society.* Montreal: Harvest House.

RICHER, P. 1992. Special employment creation programmes. *The Bilateralism Review,* 1(1):43-55.

CHAPTER 38

Response to the comments by Meer and Cock

Chris de Kock

Meer (see Chapter 36) indicates that: 'Dr Chris de Kock may concede the "historical injustices of colonialism and apartheid", but he barely departs from the De Klerk position when he holds that the Government has dropped apartheid ...' This author cannot agree with the 'barely departs' standpoint since he referred not only to the 'historical injustices of colonialism and apartheid' but also to 'the current unbalanced distribution of power and economic means; minority fears and the frustration of the majority; distorted intergroup relations and the negative stereotypes each side has formed'. In fact this author points out that South Africa is an 'extremely sick patient' who urgently needs 'a revolutionary type of surgery'. It should be emphasised that South Africa is structurally so sick that a revolutionary structural operation is necessary — one concerning not only constitutional but also economic remedies and also with regard to reconciliation and nation-building.

Meer does emphasise something which the author confesses he probably did not give enough weight to — except for the reference to conspiracies — namely that the state, whites, the IFP, homeland governments and 'township Councillors' who fought against the Revolutionary Alliance in the eighties and earlier on, are still there and that the role these counterrevolutionary forces play in the violence should not be negated. She then refers to examples such as SADF funding of UmaAfrica to foment conflict between Azapo/PAC and the ANC/UDF; the funding and training of Inkatha, and the Trust Feed massacre. Although most of these examples are drawn from the period before the 1990s and, after the exposure of these actions, the state committed itself to terminating such actions, the author concedes that politicians will always be politicians and that everything — no matter how low and inhuman — is apparently justified in the game of power politics.

Meer's statement: 'The so-called black-on-black violence is the manipulation of blacks against themselves to retain white power. The fact is that it is not blacks who are instigating violence against blacks, but it is the racists who are doing so in a desperate bid to hold on to their dying power' can be endorsed, but this author substituted conspiracies for this concept in his model. It can even be expected that there will be more and more determined conspiracies against the democratisation process and reconciliation process as we progress toward the democratic new South Africa. The assassination of the late Chris Hani, the racist terrorist attacks against whites (here the St James attack and the attack on the American exchange student Amy Biehl are recent examples) and the more ethnically oriented slaughter on the East Rand in the past two to three months (June-August 1993) support this statement. However, this author wishes to look for conspiracies not only among the 'racists' but also among all those who for some reason or other oppose the current democratisation process and believe that they have more to gain from violence. In other words, conspiracies against the democratisation process may involve both the former revolutionary and counterrevolutionary sides.

This author wishes to concur with Meer and Cock (see Chapter 36 and 37 respectively) and maintains that the role of the remnants (whatever the extent thereof may be) of colonialism and apartheid (for example: land scarcity among the less privileged majority; militarism and counterrevolutionary forces) should *never* be underestimated in the present violence indeed, this is mentioned in the original model of the dynamics of violence right at the beginning of this section (see Chapter 35). This author also wishes to go further and indicate that the reaction to apartheid and colonialism has also left a legacy (among other things, the rejection of authority through ungovernability; hatred as manifested in black racism; a culture of violence) which is also playing an important role in the current violence.

It is precisely this legacy of apartheid and the reaction to it that hold the greatest challenge to reconciliation and nation-building. This is the major structural operation the South African patient has to undergo, yet the operation will be extremely risky if the current levels of violence are not drastically reduced. In other words, we know that the already damaged heart of the patient has to be replaced, we also know that this heart has led to the patient's raised blood pressure, fever and rapid pulse rate, etc., but we have to attempt in the short term (while the operation is being carried out) to regulate the blood pressure, temperature, etc. independently of the damaged heart in such a way that the operation can be a success. It will be of no avail to throw our hands up in the air, blaming colonialism, apartheid, the reaction to apartheid and the counterrevolutionary forces — if we do, the patient might die. We also have nothing to lose by attempting to reduce the high levels of violence and intolerance before an election. If the attempt succeeds — or even if it succeeds only partially — the election can take place in optimal circumstances, which will not only contribute to a higher level of legitimacy for the transitional government (cf. De Kock *et al.* 1993), but which will in turn assist the processes of reconciliation and nation-building.

It was in an attempt to find an answer, relatively free of apartheid, to the high levels of the current violence that this author formulated the model set out at the beginning of this section. The model is intended to prevent the process from developing further in the short term, the process which Meer so aptly describes:

> Once unleashed, such insidious violence is very difficult to rein in, for it rebounds on the manipulated (or mercenaries) who make it their own cause, it factionalises communities and forces them into warring groups; breeds political intolerance with their own motives and passions. Not only has the State succeeded in unleashing violence so that from the security forces killing the people, the people are killing each other, but it has tribalised and racialised the violence, as when Zulus attacked Pondos and Indians in the Durban region, thereby creating inter-tribal, inter-race tensions.

This process has already — especially since the beginning of 1993 — developed dangerously far if one thinks of the black-on-white and white-on-black and more ethnically oriented slaughter, especially on the East Rand.

If the development of the present dynamics of violence is halted now, the medium and long-term ideals of respectively Cock: 'An important task now is to heal these wounds of war and integrate all our young people into a common and peaceful society' and Meer: 'For the long term solution, violence will only be exorcised from our society when we have a political structure capable of fulfilling the people's primary needs and eliminating poverty', can be realised. Although this author cannot agree completely with Meer's closing sentence: 'All this can *only* [author's emphasis] be done by a new democratic government responsible to the people and sensitive to their needs.' If one has to delay the restructuring of armed forces, weapons control, rumour control, etc. until after the election, it may be too late because after this author wrote the introductory contribution (in March 1993) there had been a drastic increase in levels of violence (see Figures 1 and 2 in Chapter 35) with disturbing new trends (for example more racial violence; right-wing mobilisation; and withdrawals from multiparty negotiations) coming to the fore.

SECTION IX

THE ROLE OF THE SECURITY INSTITUTIONS

CHAPTER

39 The South African Defence Force of the Future
Jakkie Cilliers

40 The creation of a legitimate defence force in a post-settlement South Africa
Rocky Williams

CHAPTER 39

The South African Defence Force of the future

Jakkie Cilliers

INTRODUCTION

There are many different definitions that attempt to capture the essence of the 'order function' in a state. Max Weber considered the use of force to be so important that he defined the state as 'a human community that (successfully) claims the monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force within a given territory.' (Weber in Gerth *et al.* 1970:78.) According to Morris Janowitz (1975:56) 'The nation-state is a territorially based social system which monopolizes the use of the instruments of violence for both internal and external objectives.' In the present South African context, there exist very different views on the relationship between the state, the government, legitimacy and the use of coercion given our history of oppression, armed resistance and violence. The distinction between the 'legal' and 'legitimate' exercise of force in South Africa had obviously become very contentious. While a case could be made that the South African Security Forces have a fair claim to the legal monopoly of force, that legality is a far cry indeed from the legitimate monopoly of the use of force. The problem is that there are so many skills, resources and organisations capable of coercion and violence.

South Africa is a very violent society. An increasing body of research indicates that a large proportion of this violence is less overtly political than a result of the declining socioeconomic situation. Much violence, it would appear, is the result of competition for scarce resources. A constitutional and political settlement will therefore only go some way to reducing the levels of individual and group violence. Such violence would, of course, occur within a changed institutional and moral setting and one would expect that the impetus for politically motivated violence would be reduced. Yet any future South African government will have to deal with continued high levels of social turbulence requiring continued high levels of Security Force action.

The legacy now faced by the South African Defence Force (SADF) is that of an organisation enjoying very different levels of acceptance and trust between the various sectors of the South African population. For the vast majority of politically aware black South Africans, the SADF is an instrument of oppression, a racially exclusive organisation which is part and parcel of the vestiges of apartheid.

The African National Congress (ANC), the largest political grouping in the country and the party set to play the dominant role in any future government, has been at the sharp end of the SADF's capabilities, both inside the country and beyond its borders. Yet the skills, expertise and professional military knowledge to run a reasonably modern military force are very much captive of the white leadership cadre of the present SADF — a fact of which the ANC is painfully aware. While the integration of MK cadres into the SADF will make some contribution towards the skills required within a future military, their primary contribution will be the provision of legitimacy — a political rather than a professional military contribution. This, and the knowledge that a government of national unity will severely constrain the freedom of any party to embark upon a programme of unilateral restructuring of state structures, underlies the reliance that even an ANC-dominated government will have upon the existing SADF.

WHAT DO WE NEED?

South Africa requires a defence force that is credible, cost-effective and legitimate. Yet this force has to be non-threatening to other countries in the region while retaining a capacity for deterrence of potential aggressors and a flexible capacity in an unstable region. The adoption of a defensive military posture is, therefore, a *sine qua non*. With regard to this long-term requirement and stated goal there can be little disagreement. The challenge facing South Africans is how to achieve this objective in a turbulent time of transition and endemic social violence.

There appear to be two important constraints to achieving this objective. On the one hand, any future, government, of whatever political persuasion, will face massive pressure (and will be very tempted) to use the SADF to quell internal instability and violence. The question of the existing and future role of the SADF in internal law and order duties in support of the SA Police and any National Peacekeeping Force is, therefore, a crucial one. On the other hand, there will be demands that the resources of the SADF contribute to nation-building and the alleviation of socioeconomic problems. Let us deal with the internal law and order role of the SADF first.

AN INTERNAL ROLE FOR THE SADF?

South Africa will continue to experience sustained high levels of social turbulence and violence for many years to come. The country will, therefore, require permanent institutions to deal with this. The requirement for clear role differentiation between the police and military and the various intelligence communities has been thrown into sharp focus by the extended internal collection and operational activities of Military Intelligence in competition with the Security Police (now the Criminal Investigation Service) and National Intelligence Service. In similar vein, the massive deployment of the SADF in support of police law and order activities has blurred the distinction between the role of the military and that of the police.

In the introduction to his book *Military Conflict*, Morris Janowitz (1975:13) focuses our attention on the essential characteristics of the military, in what he calls advanced industrial societies: '... a central political issue is not the threat of a *coup d'etat*, but rather the necessity of ensuring that the military are strictly limited in their internal police role. The hallmark of a political democracy is the sharp differentiation of the domestic police units from the military formations of national defence.'

By contrast, 'In the new nations of Africa and Asia, the basic trends have been described in the research literature in terms of the breakdown of parliamentary institutions, the expansion of the role of the military into the political arena, and the resulting institutional instability.'

Not only are the South African Police heavily dependent on military manpower to augment their own limited resources, but the police themselves have become militarised, replete with military-type vehicles, armament and doctrine. General recognition of the incompatibility of such developments with the need for community-orientated policing has already started to affect the police, and considerable progress does appear to have been made. Yet there are disturbing indications of a loss of morale, of demoralisation and inefficiency within the Police. These developments have recently been brought to the boil by the ongoing dispute between the command levels of the SA Police and the unrecognised union, the Police and Prison Civil Rights Union (POPCRU).

In an attempt both to enhance its own capacity to effect public-order policing and to reduce its reliance upon the SADF internally, the SA Police established the Internal Stability Division (ISD). Despite strict entry criteria, this Division soon ran into severe problems, established within what was perceived as an illegitimate regime, and often resorting to heavy-handed tactics. More recent is the decision to establish a National Peacekeeping Force, composed of various members of the armed and other forces. At the time of writing, the future of both the Peacekeeping

Force as well as the ISD was uncertain. Whatever the future of these two organizations, there is little chance of the withdrawal of the SADF from the townships without massively expanding that organisation tasked with public order policing.

The withdrawal of the SADF from its role in support of the police, together with the reduced external threat, would allow for a considerable reduction in the headquarters and staffs of the military, much of which are hangovers from the days of 'total strategy'. By all indications, military intelligence and special forces have already been trimmed extensively owing to public and political pressure based on the perceptions of the past activities of these organisations. However, considerable scope remains for further reduction in the scale of staff functions. Such reductions will, however, be complicated in the short term by the requirement to integrate the various armed forces of Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda and Ciskei (TBVC) and other paramilitary groupings into a single defence force. As a result, South Africa may, instead, have to expand its military in the short term.

All of this will occur against the background of severe budgetary constraints as the national financial priorities focus upon socioeconomic development and the upliftment of underprivileged communities. The share of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) accounted for by defence, has declined from a high of 4,3% in 1989 to 2,6% in 1993 (and this in a time of economic contraction in South Africa), and appears set to decline even further to a level of around 2% of GDP within a matter of five years.

Even the most cursory analysis would suggest that border control will become the second priority after internal stability and the maintenance of law and order in the medium term. The question is, to whom should the responsibility for border security be directed? One division of responsibility would be to allocate border security duties to the military, while at the same time relieving them of their internal duties in continued support of the SA Police. An alternative proposal is to create a dedicated border guard as an independent force. This would leave the military to concentrate on deterrence and defence and relieve police, presently deployed for this purpose free, for law and order duties. Yet another view favours combining the functions of public order policing and border control in a single force, along the lines of the Federal Border Police in Germany. The implications of such choices are massive for they could have major organisational implications. At issue is the gradual conversion of the South African military from a conventionally orientated force to a paramilitary, lightly armed force primarily concerned with border protection and even internal law and order duties in support of the police. The option could be an attractive one for a military facing a declining budget and no clear, easily identifiable enemy.

THE ROLE OF THE SADF IN NATION-BUILDING

A second requirement is that the SADF will have to play a role in addressing and alleviating the underlying socioeconomic causes of instability, that is, addressing the effects of apartheid. The enormous resources of that organisation (within the engineering units, for example) and its capacity as national training institution make it imperative that the SADF contribute to the difficult tasks of both nation-building and socioeconomic upliftment. It should play a role as a human resource development institution for the society at large. Education and training not only increase the well-being of those who serve their country, but also improve the nation's stock of human resources. There is, however, a limit to the use of the Security Forces as a national development asset.

When other uses for the military, such as education, medical services, engineering activities, law and order duties, humanitarian duties and the like became the primary purpose of armed forces, the politicisation of those forces is sure to follow. Such a warning does not imply that the vast resources of the military should remain idle in times of crisis, nor that limited assistance should not be rendered when and where appropriate.

Maximum effective use should be made of the SADF capabilities on the understanding that its primary task is not compromised. Therefore, such spare capacity that is available should be utilised. The SADF should not however embark upon training and skills programmes that would mean it incurs substantial additional costs. Such efforts should remain, rather, the responsibility of other government departments and organisations. In the USA, where black over-representation in the armed forces has been a source of concern for some time, the attraction of military service for this disadvantaged community is intimately linked to the opportunities which the military offers for education and skill-training. Trained personnel are a national asset. Clearer recognition of the secondary functions of the military in education and skill-training should lead to policies which would facilitate the return of educated and skilled individuals to civilian society.

THE MILITARY WITHIN A REGIONAL CONTEXT

Although the country is surrounded on three sides by ocean, South Africa's security is inextricably linked to that of the region and to the problems in countries such as Angola and Mozambique. This is evidenced most starkly in the proliferation and flow of small arms across the porous borders that constitute the countries of Southern Africa and the ever-increasing influx of illegal immigrants and refugees to this country. In the region, there are unrealistic expectations of the contribution that South Africa could make to it. Still, the acceptance of South Africa into the regional community and acceptance of the country as a regional leader are imminent and, indeed, unavoidable. Internationally, South Africa would be expected to play its role in participating in peacekeeping operations.

Stability in South Africa's neighbours is clearly in the interest of South Africa. For that reason, as well as to build trust and interdependence, the SADF should be prepared to assist and co-operate militarily with its neighbours and the legitimate governments of those countries (see Cilliers, 20-21 March 1992:2-3). But the political, socioeconomic and security problems in the larger region are so complex, and the collapse of the African version of the nation-state so complete, that an over-reliance upon collective security arrangements in lieu of a national capability is a risky strategy. Difficult choices will confront the defence planners in the next few years. Should South Africa use its resources to fend off the flow of refugees and migrants drifting in increasingly uncontrollable numbers across our borders in search of a better existence? Should South Africa involve itself in supportive actions in the region and beyond, such as disaster relief work, food supply, policing actions in support of multinational efforts, search and rescue, environmental control, food supply, military and technical training activities? Or should we focus ourselves inward, guarding our borders and nurturing our economy and people?

FORCE DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

Traditionally, a threat analysis is held as the logical departure point for military force development. This, together with information on the availability of resources for defence and government objectives, forms the primary input into force design. In the absence of any conventional military threat to South Africa, but located in an unstable region, our military forces must remain vigilant. It is received wisdom that a conventional military offensive against South Africa either by one, or any combination of its neighbours, will remain highly improbable for many years to come. It is also likely that the primary strategic concern of our neighbouring countries will continue to be the maintenance and defence of their territorial integrity, as well as the internal suppression of armed opposition to the ruling elites. Military intervention by forces beyond southern Africa is, however, much less predictable. For the time being, the South African security dilemma is that of instability, both regionally and internally.

The preceding analysis has indicated that those tasks related to border control, operations and measures in support of allies in the region, as well as participation in international peacekeeping operations, are clearly identifiable as future tasks. Yet the central role — defence of South African sovereignty — is not clearly distinguishable, apart from the protection of marine resources. This analysis would therefore suggest that the SADF should follow a classic 'core approach' in its force development. Such an approach would imply, firstly, that the force design of the SADF reflects those capacities and capabilities that would enable the military to meet most of the more likely contingencies. Hence 'flexibility' and 'multi-purpose capacity' should become the key terms when designing capacity. Whereas, in the past, there was a predictability in potential enemy doctrine, intentions and equipment, this may no longer be the case.

Multirole capability has very specific implications when it comes to standards of training, proficiency and equipment. What is required may be a smaller military force, but its capacity to perform a wide range of functions would have to be enhanced. Reliance upon force multipliers, such as balanced combat unit design, good intelligence, computerised and integrated command, control and communications, and intelligence systems will be increased. Other force multipliers, including mobility, fire-power, logistic sustainability, electronic warfare, battlefield surveillance, night-fighting capacity, education and training will also play a part in increasing the effectiveness of the forces.

A core-approach would also suggest that South Africa adopt the practice of skeleton units which are manned, equipped and maintained at a level significantly below their full or combat capacity, but with the provision for build-up to full combat strength in a relatively short period of time.

THE ESSENTIAL CHALLENGE: MORALE, MOTIVATION, AFFIRMATIVE ACTION AND EFFECTIVENESS

William Gutteridge (1978:177) warned that:

> The Police and the Armed Forces depend for adequate performance on a consciousness of unity and an awareness of their constitutional role and limits of action. These qualities must permeate the forces at all levels: hence the quality and loyalty (however defined) of the officers and other personnel is the central question. How can they be selected and recruited to this end?

Charles Moskos has categorised as the institutional character of the military to be '... an organization legitimated in terms of values and norms, that is, a purpose transcending individual self-interest in favour of a presumed higher good' (Moskos & Wood 1988:16.)

Within a stable democracy, the Security Forces operate because of career commitment. They obey the government of the day, when it acts within its powers, not because they believe that their actions are appropriate, but because it is their duty and their profession. This view emphasises the importance of the nature of the institution, rather than of the political system within which the government of the day operates. However, South Africa is not a democracy, nor does it have a democratic tradition within any large section of its populace. In fact, the traditions from which the larger political actors come are distinctly authoritarian. Whereas the democratic ideal assumes that the leadership of our future Security Forces can be effectively motivated by professional ethics alone (Janowitz 1975:58), this is problematic when faced with a society in transition, as is the case in South Africa. On the other hand, attempting to cultivate political loyalty through deliberate programmes of integration and 're-education' alone may have much worse effects. A balance will have to be struck between professionalism and effectiveness, on the one side, and 'political loyalty' or 'attitudinal correctness' on the other.

The morale and motivation for service also differs in times of war or periods of tension, and times of relative peace. Unity within the armed forces or police during times of war or turbulence appears to be sustained only to a very slight extent by the political convictions of its members. The steady satisfaction of certain primary personality demands by the social organisation, the company, battalion, police section, or unit (see, for example, M. Janowitz 1975:178) is much more important in these times. According to *The American Soldier* (Stougger, 1949:101): '... the best single predicator of combat behaviour is the simple fact of institutionalized role: knowing that a man is a soldier rather than a civilian. The soldier role is a vehicle for getting a man into the position in which he has to fight or take the institutionally sanctioned consequences.'

When the individual's immediate environment meets his basic needs, offering him affection and esteem from both superiors and comrades, supplying him with a sense of power and adequately regulating his relations with authority, the individual can deal much more effectively with the stress of his occupation. In the military, essentially isolated from civilian primary groups, the individual soldier comes to depend more and more on his military primary group. As a result, the internal integration of that group is a major source of both effectiveness and loyalty.

These considerations lead to what is perhaps the most serious dilemma facing the South African security establishment in the years that lie ahead - how to balance effectiveness with affirmative action. There can be little argument that the legitimacy and integration of the Security Forces into society are affected by the degree to which these forces reflect the composition of society. This is most obvious in the case of the police but, eventually, it also holds true for the military. However, while the numerical majority of both Police and Defence Force personnel is already black, there are very few non-whites in leadership positions. White leadership dominates in skills, knowledge, and organisation, that is, in virtually every meaningful area of professional activity. Whilst the various homeland forces have established some skills base in selected categories, the impact of their integration into single structures will be limited. Given the strictly limited professional military skills base within MK, even the various preparatory training courses that these cadres are undergoing in a number of foreign countries (including Uganda and India), will have a less than dramatic impact when these persons are integrated into a future unified defence structure.

ETHNICITY AND RACIAL BALANCE

There is an influential school of thought wishing to remove any reference to ethnicity and race in the wider South African debate as an evil remnant of the past. The pragmatic view is, however, that race and ethnicity will remain central phenomena in a future South Africa, with or without the use of 'politically incorrect' terminology. It may be argued that any debate on affirmative action within the South African context is rendered meaningless without reference to race. Cynthia H. Enloe, in her book *Ethnic Soldiers* (1980:5), argues that: '... state elites — modern no less than pre-modern — conceive of politics and their own interests in ethnic terms far more often than they admit; ... state elites exploit ethnic divisions at the same time as they publicly deplore them. In other words, when state planners set out to optimize their security, they think ethnically.'

We do not have to search very far for an example of this. Following the electoral victory of the National Party in 1948, the Union Government systematically converted all governmental institutions into Afrikaner institutions. The then Union Defence Force was an obvious target. In the military, many British-trained, English-speaking officers were pressurised into premature retirement, and recruitment in the officer corps was dominated by Afrikaners. Regiments with an 'English' character lost much of their historic identity. New uniforms, insignia and even rank designations were introduced.

The present high levels of violence, insecurity among large sections of the South African populace and the emotionally charged debate on the partiality and alleged involvement of various military and guerrilla forces in violence, give some indication of the sensitivity of the issue of racial and ethnic balances. The survival of South Africa as a single state in the difficult years ahead may depend partly upon the attention which is devoted to balancing the composition of its Security Forces, while retaining skills and technical professionalism. Also of importance will be the effectiveness of the Security Forces in restoring law and order and due process. In India, military professionalism has tended to turn the Indian army into a national melting pot. In a country such as Nigeria, by contrast, the army reflected and even magnified the country's divisions, leading to the coup in 1966 and the civil war which followed. Both countries have federal political constitutions, the one torn by ethnic divisions, the other by religion and class.

Any long-term menpower procurement and leadership development programme should strive to make the military representative of the South African society in terms of race and ethnic composition. This objective should, however, remain a goal, with progress benchmarks, and not be translated into quotas.

CONCLUSION

The issue of legitimacy of state institutions and the care taken in selecting and structuring the armed forces is a crucial area for policy research. In certain areas of our country, a state of near civil war has developed which will require concerted and resolute action by any newly elected national government.

The Security Forces have to deal with unprecedented levels of criminal and political violence, mass action and protest. These place a severe strain on organisations burdened with particular histories, internal policies and often inappropriate doctrines. Both the SADF and the SA Police need to be reorientated and, at least to some degree, restructured. There is, however, a greater limitation to what can be achieved without seriously destabilising and undermining the organisational coherence of these forces than is generally recognised. The crisis of distrust has developed over many years and is, in itself, a complicated phenomenon. Apart from the obvious historical burden of apartheid and its accompanying legislation, there is a range of associated issues within our Security Forces as they are presently constituted. Some of those regarding the SA Police have recently been highlighted by the contents of the report by Dr. Waddington (20 July 1992) from the United Kingdom. Contentious issues in the military concern, among other things, the blurring of roles and functions between the military and the police, the activities of organisations such as Special Forces and Military Intelligence, the alleged politicisation of the various armed and paramilitary organisations, and so on.

This lack of trust and legitimacy is, however, also greatly aided by the remnants of a deliberate campaign of vilification, intimidation and murder against these forces. South Africans are reaping the bitter fruits of strategies that were adopted in the mid-1980s to make the country ungovernable and to launch a no-holds barred 'people's war'. For many months now, the control of the Security Forces has become yet another arena for the party-political struggle for power between the government and the ANC alliance. The government fears capitulation while its opponents fear co-option.

There are no forces that can meaningfully replace either the Police or the SADF, given our present levels of violence. Nor can their legitimacy be restored overnight. It is not, therefore, a question of the disbandment and unilateral restructuring of these forces, but rather how to engage and assist their adaptation in a constructive manner. But, in this process, the contradictions of apartheid need to be addressed. These include an end to the nominally separate police, military and judicial structures in the homelands, as well as the provision of equal opportunities and educational assistance programmes in the widest sense.

In the process of change and adaptation of the military there are positive roles that a number of countries can play (Cilliers 1993). These include the role of 'honest broker', providing assistance with retraining (where necessary and appropriate) and reorientation. There is, for example, a great deal that South Africa could learn from the experience of the US military in the execution of its equal opportunity programmes. From Germany, we could learn about civic education programmes and institutionalised civil-military relations. The French could teach us about their experience with separate organisations for public order policing, and so on.

South Africa needs training teams attached to its police and military colleges. It needs access to military and police colleges in established democracies. Serving police and military officers and academic experts should come to come to South Africa and boost the local capacity to meet the country's conflicting requirements. This need not require huge spending. The money would also be more wisely and effectively spent than in the support of many socio-economic projects, which often fall victim to the scourge of violence or the funds which are soaked up by competing NGO's and bureaucracies.

REFERENCE

CILLIERS, J.K. 1992. *A security policy for a democratic South Africa.* Paper delivered at a conference on Foreign policy issues in a democratic South Africa. Sandton: Indaba Hotel, 20-21 March.

CILLIERS, J.K. 1993. The South African Armed Forces: The future and the potential role of the international community. *South African Defence Review*, No. 11.

ENLOE, C.H. 1980. *Ethnic soldiers*. Penguin.

GUTTERIDGE, W. 1978. The public services in a plural society. In: Rhoodie, N.J. (ed.) *Intergroup accommodation in plural societies*. London: Macmillan.

JANOWITZ, M. 1975. *Military conflict — Essays in the institutional analysis of war and peace*. Beverly Hills: Sage.

MOSKOS, C. & WOOD, F.R. (eds). 1988. *The military — More than just a job?* Pergamon-Brassey's, Washington.

STOUGGER, S.A. *et al.* 1947. *The American soldier*. Princeton. *Military Affairs/Aerospace*.

WADDINGTON, P.A.J. 1992. *Report of the inquiry into the police response to, and investigation of, events in Boipatong on 17 June 1992.* 20 July.

WEBER, Max. 1970. Politics as a vocation. In: GERTH, H. & MILLS, C.W. (eds). *From Max Weber.* London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

CHAPTER 40

The creation of a legitimate defence force in a post-settlement South Africa

Rocky Williams

> *'Our legions are brim-full, our cause is ripe.*
> *The enemy increaseth every day;*
> *We at the height, are ready to decline.*
> *There is a tide in the affairs of men,*
> *Which taken at the flood, leads on to fortune;*
> *Omitted, all the voyage of their life*
> *Is bound in shallows and miseries.*
> *On such a full sea are we now afloat,*
> *And we must take the current when it serves,*
> *Or lose our ventures'*

(Act IV, Scene III, *Julius Caesar*)

Brutus's words to Cassius before their battle against the combined forces of Octavius and Mark Anthony are particularly pertinent in the present South African transition. We are undeniably experiencing a unique moment in our country's history — a moment that provides the possibility of establishing something of enduring worth for future generations. Nowhere is this more urgent than in the sphere of the armed forces of the future. If we are to overcome the 'enemy' in its various manifestations — be it violence, ongoing militarisation of society, and the recurring threat of military intervention from the 'man on horseback' — then it is imperative that future civil-military relations be stabilised and legitimised.

This chapter, therefore, explores one central concept in relationship to the restructuring of the armed forces in a post-settlement South Africa — the recurring problem of 'legitimacy'. 'Legitimacy', in its various forms, provides the vital ingredient without which the armed forces of the future cannot operate — regardless of their levels of technical and technological proficiency.

Towards this end, this chapter isolates those areas central to the process of legitimation itself. These are isolated as: the composition of a future defence force; the institutional restructuring of a future defence force; the roles and missions of a future defence force (referred to by Cilliers in his introduction); the creation of stable civil-military relations and the ensuring of transparency and accountability therein; and the initiation of a series of confidence-building measures within and between the armed forces and the region.

Legitimacy and its inseparable moral basis are, undeniably, not the only issues which will characterise the restructuring of the armed forces in the future — although they will certainly constitute the bedrock upon which it is built. Cilliers correctly isolates a range of other issues which will feature prominently in this process — roles and tasks of the armed forces, affirmative action and combat — readiness, the ethnic composition of a future defence force, and the role of foreign instances in the integration process.

A range of issues, in addition to those sketched by Cilliers, will confront defence planners of the future. Included in these will be the scope of regional security relations, the restructuring of the defence intelligence function, the reconstitution of elite units, and the revision of prevailing defence doctrine. However, a shortage of space prevents a more extensive exploration of all these issues and this chapter accordingly, will, focus on the key issue of legitimacy (what do we mean by the term and how is it created?). The primary objective of this chapter is to demythologise the concept of 'legitimacy' and to suggest pro-active measures whereby a high level of legitimacy can be obtained.

UNPACKING LEGITIMACY: CONCEPTUAL CONSIDERATIONS

The logical geography of a concept

The term 'legitimacy' has acquired an almost buzz word status in the current South African transition. It is used to refer to a range of phenomena — governments, political cultures, institutions, state apparatuses and the armed forces. But what are the logical contours of the concept and to what variations and permutations can it admit?

Legitimacy, this chapter contends, is a master concept that consists of a synthesis of a number of interrelated concepts — the most important being 'representativeness' and the principles underpinning this representativeness, 'consensus', and 'morality'. These subconcepts are analysed individually below.

For people to believe that an institution is 'representative', (in this case the armed forces) it is essential that two conditions are met. The first is that the institution 'looks' as representative as possible — that its command echelons are not all-white, that certain regional interests are not dominant in its structures, and that its commanding personnel are not ethnically exclusive in origin, for instance.

The second condition is that the role of the armed forces is in accordance with the contract entered into between the commonwealth and the state — that the citizenry feel that the armed forces represent their interests (their protection against external aggression, for instance). Indeed, the legitimising principles underpinning a particular institution are central to the process of securing legitimacy for the armed forces. An institution may be representative in terms of its composition but unrepresentative in terms of its mission — the tension between the composition of the South African Police (estimated to be 60 per cent black) and its repressive role is an example.

Underpinning this process is the crucial question of 'consensus'. Without popular consensus — predicated on the support certain socially significant sectors of society bestow upon the political process — the bulk of the citizenry will feel disempowered in relation to national political institutions, and at the mercy of decisions that are made for them and not with them. The level of consensus achieved will depend on the particular political culture concerned — it may be developed, medium or minimal, for instance. This level of consensus is therefore intimately related to the legitimacy of the institutions that emerge within a specific political culture.

The question of 'morality' is crucial to the success of any legitimation project. Morality, in this sense, is not used in an absolute sense of the word and is relativist in content. The normative framework characterising a fundamentalist Islamic Republic may be regarded as profoundly moral and legitimate by its citizens, but may be at variance with the normative framework underpinning a Western democracy. An appropriate normative framework is therefore essential in justifying the pursuit by an apparatus of what the public believes to be the 'common good'.

Legitimacy, in practical terms, cannot be attained unless certain general sociological conditions are met. These are basically three in number. The first is that the appropriate mechanisms exist whereby this legitimacy is to be created (codes of conduct, parliamentary oversight committees, and ombuds systems in the case of the armed forces). The second is that the principles of this legitimacy are clear and unambiguous (non-racialism, accountability, and representativeness in the South African situation). The third is that a legitimation project receive support from certain socially significant (and preferably numerically dominant) sectors of society (the working class, capital, the middle classes and the intelligentsia in the South African context).

THE 'NUTS AND BOLTS' OF LEGITIMACY: CREATING A LEGITIMATE DEFENCE FORCE

What does 'legitimacy' mean in practical terms and how can it be created (either partially or entirely) in the present South African transition? The legitimacy of the armed forces, or any component apparatus of the state ensemble, can be created via a compound of various factors. Although the 'weight' of these different factors will vary according to the social formation under consideration, these factors are essential to the process of legitimising institutions in general.

A range of practical measures can be instituted to achieve sufficient levels of legitimacy within a future defence force. Legitimising options that can be explored, include the composition of the armed forces, the roles and missions of the armed forces, the political profile of the forces, the institutional culture of the armed forces, public access to the armed forces, and the relationships between the armed forces and the region. These are analysed below.

The composition of the armed forces: creating nationally representative institutions

The creation of a visibly representative defence force is perhaps the most obvious microstrategy in the legitimation arsenal. In ideal terms, the armed forces should strive to be as representative of the country's diverse gender, national, racial, ethnic, regional and linguistic categories as possible. In reality this is rarely the case, and the armed forces can, at best, strive for as much representativeness as is possible under the circumstances (particularly if one is to avoid the highly artificial process of apportioning exact ratios to an institution's composition).

This process will undoubtedly be complex during the transformation of the South African armed forces. Although the lower ranks of the SADF and virtually the entire structures of MK and the combined TVBC armies are broadly representative (in regional, non-racial and ethnic terms), the command echelons of the SADF remain almost exclusively white. Because the SADF is the largest component of these six different armies, and possesses a vast monopoly on most military-technical skills, it can be expected that any future integrated defence force will continue to be dominated, in the short term, by such officers.

Although a programme of affirmative action must be instituted by a future government, it must avoid the temptation to restructure the armed forces on the basis of political, personal and sentimental reasons. The professional capabilities of the armed forces, at least in the military-technical sphere, must be retained as far as possible. The extensive damage done to the Union Defence Force by the then Defence Minister, Erasmus, in the post-1948 period is a pertinent reminder!

Although a racial imbalance may persist in a future defence force in the short to medium term, this does not imply that other avenues cannot be explored in terms of securing a greater representativeness within the ranks. A future defence force, it is hoped, will continue to embody the strong South African tradition of avoiding a large permanent force and will continue to rely on reserves for its appropriate military manpower commitments. It is within the Citizen Force that the prospects for deracializing the command echelons can be more speedily achieved (which are, both in numbers and in responsibilities, 'the armed forces' once a situation of full-scale mobilisation has been attained). The relatively short duration of Citizen Force promotion courses, and the non-continuous nature of Citizen Force military commitments makes this mission somewhat more easy to accomplish.

A limited legitimacy can be attained in terms of the composition of the armed forces of the future. This is a problem that will undoubtedly rectify itself in the medium to long term. To secure a greater legitimacy for the armed forces of the future, however, will require the investigation of other legitimising options.

Of primary and secondary missions: creating a 'leaner and cleaner' defence force

Future missions: the basis for institutional restructuring

Considerable scope for the creation of broadly based legitimacy centres on redefinition of the roles and missions of the armed forces in the future. Within the framework of the legitimacy creation, it is proposed that the mission/s of the armed forces be framed as follows:

- The primary mission should be confined to the preservation of the territorial integrity of the country.
- The secondary missions should include:
  - military aid to the civil community during periods of national emergencies or disaster;
  - military aid to the civil power under circumstances strictly determined by parliament;
  - combating local rural insurgencies when the resources of the police prove inadequate to deal with them;
  - the provision of military assistance to international military operations in accordance with a future government's international obligations.

What is particularly evident from a consideration of these primary and secondary missions is their uncontentious nature (with the exception of military aid to the civil power — which would be realised only in circumstances of severe emergency). It is also evident from an appraisal of the above that there are certain missions which are not apportioned to the armed forces. These include urban counterinsurgency operations (unless within the context of military aid to the civil power) and the combating of crime, political and social violence. These tasks, it is felt, fall legitimately within the scope of police operations. The armed forces are neither equipped for nor trained in these tasks. The implications of these missions for the restructuring of the armed forces are profound.

Tentative suggestions with regard to institutional restructuring

Taken to their logical conclusion, these missions would have the following implications for the organizational features of a future defence force:

- The withdrawal of the armed forces from an urban counterinsurgency role (the preserve of the police or a suitable paramilitary structure) will do much to reduce their force levels, their inflated budgets and their nascent praetorianism. It will also remove them from an operational sphere within which both their credibility and their image will be continually undermined.
- The restriction of the armed forces to their primary mission will witness the devolution of the bulk of the Army's functions into the conventional force structure for a future defence force. If these forces continue to be predominantly reservist, as they have tended to be in the past, and if the mission of these forces is limited to an external threat scenario, as it is hoped they will be, then the capacity of the armed forces to intervene will be substantially reduced. Conventional forces also tend to embody the 'cleaner' image of soldiering and provide a potential series of symbols around which the populace can identify.
- The absence of a threat scenario provides the basis for the restructuring of the contentious and more praetorian sectors of the armed forces. A 'negative threat' scenario makes the retention of such bloated functions as Special Forces, Military Intelligence and Army Intelligence increasingly difficult to justify. The reduction and possible deconstitution of these structures will deny a power base to present and future reactionary officer factions and create greater confidence among the public in the defence force.
- The process of regional and domestic demilitarisation should be reflected in the posture of a future defence force. The SADF's present doctrine of 'offensive defence' is hardly justifiable in a context of regional cooperation. Alternative defensive postures should be developed with an emphasis on their military viability in the region, and their political symbolism. This will undoubtedly

contribute to the creation of greater confidence within the region and a greater level of regional legitimacy for the South African armed forces themselves.

- The politicians must desist from using the armed forces in a civic-action capacity. This lowers morale, undermines military efficiency and invariably leads to the politicisation of the armed forces — with all the corresponding threats which that poses to their legitimacy.

An earnest endeavour must also be made to transform the institutional culture of the armed forces, particularly the regimental system, although there is much to build on most notably in the traditional regiment system.

Restructuring the institutional culture of the armed forces

Institutional cultures — that collection of traditions, symbols and procedures that characterise a particular institution — play a crucial role in legitimising an apparatus to its members. The culture of regiments in particular can provide a psychological home to unit members, and encapsulate historical themes and traditions which are perceived as being important to the citizens of a particular country and with which they identify.

The institutional culture of the present SADF is predicated on a synthesis of British military traditions, Boer military traditions and, in most cases, racially exclusive regimental traditions. The capacity of the present SADF to provide an institutional culture that is acceptable not only to future members but also to most South Africans is consequently limited.

A possible alternative would be to synthesise the positive features of the SADF's present institutional culture — its traditional regiment system and its conventional force tradition for example — with the popular (and populist) traditions of Umkhonto we Sizwe. MK possesses a vast amount of goodwill and credibility among black South Africans (possibly disproportionate to their military achievements) and it would seem a great pity to squander this valuable resource in pursuit of a narrow technocratic agenda.

Beyond conscription: towards the creation of a volunteer reserve?

Conscription, without popular endorsement, can substantially undermine both the legitimacy of a future defence force and its internal cohesion. It is significant to note that the least popular moments in the Union Defence Force/SADF's history related to periods when its conscript musterings were utilised in unpopular wars both domestically and abroad (the First World War, the German West African invasion, the suppression of the 1914 Rebellion, the 1922 strike, and the repeated mutinies over harsh operational conditions within the SADF in the late 1970s and the 1980s).

Rather than utilize conscription as the basis for manpower procurement, it is suggested that a volunteer reserve system be instituted whereby people can volunteer either for national service or for Citizen Force duties (or both). Unemployment, attractive enlistment packages, and skills provision can prove to be powerful inducements. A defence force reared on a volunteer ethos affecting both its regular and reservist musterings will not only link the armed forces with the community they serve (and prevent its cultural and political isolation), but will also restrain its more praetorian factions.

Of transparency and accountability: inspiring public confidence via effective control over the armed forces

Nothing creates a greater legitimacy for the armed forces than the belief that not only are the armed forces accountable to the citizenry, but that the citizenry itself exercises the last word in the control of the armed forces. Control over the armed forces can be wielded via three avenues (either individually or in conjunction with one another). These are detailed below.

Formal political control over the armed forces in the transition and the future

Future civil-military relations will emerge, largely, from the womb of present and transitional civil-military relations. Transitional structures will undoubtedly witness a further strengthening of these formal mechanisms. Consensus has been reached, thus far, that the security establishment will be subject to multiparty supervision during the transition. Recommendations have been put forward that an expert body be constituted to act in an advisory capacity to the proposed Security Multiparty Committee, that a military ombudsperson system be instituted, and that a code of conduct (beyond the existing MDC) be created.

Structures that have been proposed by a wide range of actors for the transition include a Security Multiparty Committee (or a similar structure to oversee the security establishment, a military ombudsperson to whom complaints against the armed forces can be referred by either civilians or armed forces personnel themselves, a defence council which would act as an advisory structure to the Security Multiparty Committee on all matters of a defence or security nature, and a code of conduct for the armed forces which would emphasise the soldier's responsibility to act constitutionally, critically and ethically in all military situations.

It is important that a new government critically examine the range of formal political mechanisms via which control over the armed forces can be exerted. Traditional forms of political and parliamentary control over the armed forces that have been successfully applied elsewhere in the world have included the following measures:

- The institution of a strong and legitimate civilian Ministry and Department of Defence. The Indian experience is instructive in that all persons working either for the Ministry or for the Secretariat have to be civilians.
- The Parliamentary Committees which have total or partial jurisdiction over defence and security matters. The British example provides an indication of what is entailed in this arrangement:
  - The Defence Select Committee produces reports of current interest on defence matters. In the past it has succeeded in uncovering instances of mismanagement and inefficiency in defence circles.
  - The Public Accounts Committee investigates public expenditure and financial management and is one of the most incisive parliamentary weapons against the power of the executive.
  - The Foreign Affairs Select Committee investigates military and defence matters as they relate to the pursuit of foreign policy.
  - There are numerous variations on the role of the specialist committees. The specialist committees of the German Bundestag, for example, are directly involved in the formulation of policy and tend to play less of a scrutinizing role than their British counterparts.
- At the end of the day, a strong and purposeful Treasury can remain the single most important player in controlling the armed forces. The Congressional Budget Office in the USA, for instance, offers budget analyses and spending alternatives to the Congressional Committees even before executive decisions are taken.
- The right to ask either verbal or written questions in parliament on defence and security matters.
- The institution of a strong military ombud's system to which aggrieved civilian or military personnel can refer military-related complaints.
- The provision of legislation allowing the public access to and information on military-related development — effectively denied in the UK through the Official Secrets Act, but facilitated in the USA through the Freedom of Information Act.

A variety of additional mechanisms can be introduced to facilitate civilian political control over the armed forces. The Indian experience provides a creative admixture of such proposals.

India represents a society in which the prospects of creating stable civil-military relations would appear to be continually bedevilled. Ethnically divided, politically heterogeneous and socially stratified, it presents many of the ideal ingredients for a successful coup scenario. The Indian experience, however, represents a tradition of securing civilian dominance and/or influence wherever possible. It is structurally designed to frustrate the corporate ambitions of the armed forces — even if these do not exist!

Supreme political authority over the armed forces in India is vested in the Prime Minister. However, real political control is exercised by Cabinet's Political Affairs Committee consisting of the Minister of Defence, representatives from the Treasury, and a scientific advisor. The three Service Chiefs may attend the meetings of the PAC but they possess no automatic right of access. The Ministry of Defence, for its part, is almost entirely civilian.

Budgetary control over the armed forces is exercised by the Treasury, but Service Chiefs do not meet directly with the Treasury. The Treasury finalises budgetary details via the Ministry of Defence thereby preventing the armed forces from developing a direct and personal relationship with the Treasury. Civilians are not only dominant at all levels of the Ministry, Cabinet Committee and budget levels, but are also present on the planning committees.

The Indian example was provided to illustrate the extent to which civilian control can be asserted over the armed forces — particularly with regard to the budget and planning cycles. Some military problems with the institution of such a system are evident — the professionalism of the armed forces and military/government coordination can be undermined, for example. However, it provides a powerful example of the principle of civil supremacy being applied in practice and could certainly be considered, with various permutations, within the South African scenario.

Informal political control over the armed forces

Informal political control over the armed forces is a weaker and more indirect interface than that outlined in the formal mechanisms above. This is largely dependent on the principles inherent in the formal political equation — the level of transparency and accountability permitted by executive government, for instance — but also contains a dynamism of its own (the right of the citizenry to be informed on defence and security matters).

A prerequisite for successful informal political control over the armed forces is a resilient and entrenched civil society. A wide range of civic and political structures, each possessing appropriate levels of support and legitimacy, can compel a discreet defence force to display a much greater degree of openness than traditionally perceived. Organisations with a vested interest in the activities of the armed forces include church groupings, peace groups, military and strategic study think-tanks, environmental groups, local communities (when affected by military actions), and employer organisations.

Transparency in defence-related matters can really be successful only when the political culture of a country permits open and unfettered questioning of the activities of the armed forces. This can be established by legislation (through appropriate Freedom of Information Acts), by precedence, or by pressure (public demand on the armed forces).

Structural control over the armed forces in the transition and the future

Stable civil/military relations and the creation of legitimacy will also depend, to a certain extent, on the disposition of the officer corps to intervene in the political process. An officer corps with the inclination to intervene will constitute a continual threat to the stability of civil/military relations and civilian government. Ensuring that such a situation does not emerge in the future involves the creation of a training culture within a future defence force, that can facilitate the creation of a constitutionalist corporate identity among the officer corps, and the judicious juggling of present officers to enhance the influence of constitutionalist officers within a future defence force.

It is therefore important to ensure that a future defence force will benefit from the existence of constitutionally minded officers within the ranks of MK, the SADF, and the TVBC armies. A number of suggestions can be made:

- The position of Chief of the Defence Force should be scrapped. The concentration of power within the offices of a single officer greatly increases the prospect of a coup scenario emerging. Individual service Chiefs (Army, Air Force and Navy) can report to the Ministry of Defence on an individual basis. Cooperation between the different arms can be secured via Joint Operations and Joint Planning Committees.
- The influence of the Air Force and the Navy should be enhanced in comparison with that of the present SA Army.
- Those officers (from all armies) who have exhibited praetorian tendencies in the past should be transferred/appointed to non-influential command positions (Corps Directors, certain training functions, etc.).
- A system of understudy should be introduced whereby constitutionally minded officers should be utilised as deputies for indispensable but possibly reactionary officers.
- It should be ensured that influential and sensitive command and staff positions are occupied, wherever possible, by officers with a record of constitutional action.

The respect with which an apolitical and non-partisan officer corps is viewed, is evident in countries where that particular tradition is pronounced — the USA, the UK, Botswana and India, for example. The belief that the armed forces are merely executing their professional responsibilities in a public and responsible manner will do much to enhance the credibility of a future defence force.

Legitimising the armed forces in the region: towards the adoption of a defensive posture

Whatever political dispensation emerges from the current transition, it is evident that South Africa will remain a regional powerhouse and possibly a continental subpower in forthcoming decades. With such a profile will come attendant political, economic, diplomatic and (as a corollary to diplomatic) military responsibilities. However, the regional perception of South Africa's defence posture is not favourable. The strategy of regional destabilisation (enshrined in the SADF's present doctrine of 'offensive defence') has made the regions wary of the present SADF's regional designs and, quite possibly, wary of those of a future defence force.

Allaying these fears, establishing legitimacy and building confidence in the armed forces of a democratic South Africa, will require a thoroughgoing programme of confidence and security building measures between the armed forces of the future and the region. A possible suggestion might be the commitment of a future South African defence force to a largely defensive posture.

A range of confidence-building measures in the regional military sphere can reduce tension and contribute both to the demilitarisation of the region and to the institutional demilitarisation of the states in the region. The primary impetus for these measures will have to come from South Africa as the largest military power on the continent and the only country in the region with an offensive military posture. Doctrinal and strategic components of this new doctrine could include the following features:

- Renouncing the capacity to attack a neighbouring country. This does not imply the renunciation of a country's ability to mount offensive operations, but limits these to the country's territory itself, or to areas immediately adjacent to its territory.
- Avoiding the provocation of neighbouring states through the maintenance of a large permanent force, sophisticated weapons systems, large concentrations of personnel on borders, etc.
- The utilisation of defensive rather than offensive military tactics to secure the sovereignty of the nation. This involves such classic tactics as defence-in-depth; light, highly mobile forces; and self-reliance (all of which are deeply inscribed in the South African military tradition).

The tactical and strategic application of these three criteria could include the following practical measures:

- Scrapping certain weapons systems such as long-range rockets and nuclear weaponry

- Withdrawing mobile air and land forces from border regions where no military threat exists
- Greater reliance on reserves to ensure that mobilisation of personnel would be visible and less threatening than the maintenance of a large permanent force
- Use of early warning systems such as sharing intelligence, long-range surveillance systems, notification and joint observations of exercises
- Reducing the attractiveness of certain military targets through decentralisation and dispersion of forces
- Strengthening air defence systems

It is also important to ensure that the regional arms race assumes neither a quantitative nor a qualitative dimension and that in addition to preventing horizontal proliferation (conventional arms exports and build-ups), vertical proliferation (weapons development and R & D functions) should be controlled. To ensure that regional stability is guaranteed in both the medium- and the long-term scenarios, it is advisable that the countries of the region plan accordingly. In any regional arrangement the principles of CBM should become the guiding standards for domestic defence policy in the following arenas: weapons innovation and procurement process; force structure planning and design; domestic defence posture and doctrine, and arms control and arms exports into crisis areas in the subcontinent.

CONCLUSION: 'THE NOBLEST ROMAN OF THEM ALL': TOWARDS A MORAL CONCEPT OF SOLDIERING

> *This was the noblest Roman of them all;*
> *All the conspirators save only he*
> *Did that they did in envy of great Caesar;*
> *He only, in a general honest thought*
> *And common good to all, made one of them.*
> *His life was gentle, and the elements*
> *So mix'd in him that Nature might stand up*
> *And say to all the world 'This was a man'*

(Act 5, Scene 5, Julius Caesar)

Mark Anthony's tribute to the slain Brutus is more often remembered for its moving words than for its military application. It is, however, a tribute paid by a commander to his defeated military adversary. It is the recognition by a fellow soldier, after a long and trying battle, that the pursuit of soldiering involves much more than merely the technical mastery of one's mustering. It involves such essential ingredients as virtue, honour, honesty, bravery and integrity. Although idealistic, it is surely the 'model', the moral basis, upon which any future military ethos should be erected.

Both morality and legitimacy will prove crucial to the creation of a future defence force. Without a defence force that is perceived as legitimate by the bulk of the population, and which has a moral ethos inscribed within its institutional culture, the armed forces face the risk either of becoming culturally isolated from society or, in a worst case scenario, of using their influence to pursue their own partisan and corporate agendas. The present South African transition will provide a rare opportunity to establish both a legitimacy and a morality for the political culture and institutions of this country. To block this possibility — particularly with regard to the armed forces — is to commit future generations to a risky and uncertain future.

SECTION

X

INTERNATIONAL INVOLVEMENT IN NATION-BUILDING

CHAPTER

41 International involvement in nation- and state-building in South Africa
Deon Geldenhuys

42 Determinants of foreign involvement in South Africa
Erich Leistner

43 International involvement in state construction and nation-building
Anthoni van Nieuwkerk and Lebona Mosia

44 Building a democratic South Africa: the role of international organisations
Prince Mokotedi

CHAPTER 41

International involvement in nation- and state-building in South Africa

Deon Geldenhuys

Most of South Africa's major political parties and organisations agree that the international community should play a role in shaping a post-apartheid society. Although local protagonists differ on the precise nature and extent of foreign involvement in the South African political process, much of the desired engagement falls roughly into the categories of state- and nation-building.

This introductory section explores three basic questions: *Why* should the outside world involve itself in state- and nation-building in South Africa? *How* could foreigners become engaged in these domestic processes? And *what* could they realistically achieve?

Before considering these issues, a word on terminology is called for. State-building refers to the establishment of the basic institutions and procedures of a modern state. These include the drafting of a constitution; the creation and actual operation (not necessarily at the central level of government only) of a legislature, an executive and its supporting bureaucracy, and a judiciary; the establishment of a defence force; and the introduction of a tax system. Where the institutions of the state have long been in existence, as in South Africa, it is more appropriate to talk of a process of *state reconstruction* that lies ahead.

Nation-building refers to the development of a common identity and loyalty among the populace as a whole. Subnational loyalties, whether regional, ethnic, racial, class, religious or ideological in nature, should be superseded by an identification with the nation and with the institutions and symbols of the state. *Reconciliation* between antagonistic groups is a prerequisite for successful nation-building.

There is of course a link between state- and nation-building, and this has implications for external involvement. Should nation-building fail because intercommunal reconciliation cannot be achieved — and sections of society secede — state-building will *ipso facto* collapse. Even in the lesser case of severe intra-societal discord and attempts to fragment the nation, the institutions of the state will be placed under severe strain. Conversely, it is possible that state-building can fail without necessarily jeopardising the integrity of the nation. An inept, authoritarian government may so abuse its position that it undermines the legitimacy of the state and alienates itself from the populace, which may in turn find some unity of purpose in opposing the government. In this case, state-building would be endangered but the nation could survive intact. Failure on one or both of these fronts, it will be argued, will discourage rather than encourage foreign engagement in South Africa. In short, external support for state reconstruction and nation-building in South Africa may well prove to be a fair-weather involvement.

WHY INTERNATIONAL INVOLVEMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA?

It is not surprising that South Africans expect the outside world to assist them in tangible ways in their quest for a new political order. The international community had invested heavily in what was a universal crusade against apartheid. Implicit objectives of the struggle were to restructure key state institutions to reflect the interests of the (black) majority and to build a united South African nation in place of the racially and ethnically fragmented communities. Now that apartheid is being abolished and the country is in the process of shaping a new democratic constitution, it could be argued, the world community has at least a moral duty to help ensure an outcome consistent with what has long been demanded of South Africa, that is, a united and non-racial democratic society. A more forthright version of this view is that foreigners should now put their money where their mouths have been all along.

An extension of the first argument is that other nations owe it to the long-suffering majority in South Africa to help them in a material fashion to build a free and prosperous society. According to this view, black South Africans' struggle against apartheid was part and parcel of a far wider fight against racial oppression; they had borne the brunt of oppression and carried the banner of freedom on behalf of their downtrodden brethren across the globe. Because their final liberation is seen as a symbolic victory for all victims of racial oppression, South Africans deserve tangible support from abroad. And because black South Africans had suffered more grievously under apartheid than blacks under any other system, they are thought to have a special claim to international assistance as they build a new South Africa.

A further case for international involvement in nation-building and state reconstruction is made on the grounds that South Africa is such an important country that the world simply cannot afford to see it becoming another African political and economic disaster. Here importance is defined in material rather than in symbolic terms. An economic giant in the African context, South Africa holds in its hands the fate of millions of people beyond its borders; in both a socioeconomic and political sense, they could be either pulled up or dragged down by South Africa. To save at least the southern African region from decline and eventual disaster, the international community (read: the First World) should help to build a stable and prosperous South Africa.

A different contention is that foreign engagement in South Africa conforms to an important international trend of our time. Outside actors are becoming increasingly involved in the internal affairs of countries, particularly in the Third World. Unlike military intervention, the engagement is supposed to be non-confrontational and collaborative in nature, where the foreigners work with local parties in pursuit of common or compatible political objectives. South Africa is already a case in point with various international monitor/observer teams stationed in the country. A number of other states have recently had their general elections monitored by foreigners. Reference can also be made to the introduction of structural adjustment programmes in several Third World countries: this typically involves their implementing domestic policy changes proposed by the IMF and the World Bank.

Finally, it would be naïve to ignore rather selfish partisan motivations among local groups. Some of them could encourage foreign involvement in South Africa as a means of political point-scoring. Foreign observer missions in particular may be regarded as a means of international 'checking' on domestic political opponents or exposing the latters' suspected misdeeds and thereby embarrassing them, while the other side hopes to get an international certificate of exemplary conduct.

These rationales are offered (or at least entertained) by South Africans, who believe that their country is entitled to foreign support and will gain from it.

How could foreign parties themselves justify their involvement in a South Africa that is fast slipping from the collective international conscience with the world's attention and resources directed at more pressing matters elsewhere? Could others be expected to do South Africa a 'disinterested favour' (to paraphrase George Washington)? Or would they be inspired by the noblest of humanitarian considerations? (Would this include concern about tens of thousands of people — including foreign passport holders — fleeing another human tragedy in Africa for safer havens in the First World?) Is the possible service to the people of the entire subcontinent a plausible justification? Or would basic self-interest in terms of attainable benefits for the foreign party be the deciding factor? Here one is obviously thinking of the benefits that South Africa and the region hold as an actual or potential economic partner. But are these attractive enough to justify any extensive and extended foreign involvement in this country's domestic politics?

Viewed from the perspective of other nations, the case for involvement in the Republic seems far less clear-cut and compelling than many South Africans would want to believe. We need to bear this in mind, lest unrealistic expectations of outside support are aroused. Whatever other considerations come into play, it is reasonable to say that international engagement in South Africa would have to be driven by the belief that the venture has a reasonable chance of producing the desired outcome in terms of both state reconstruction and nation-building. Why would foreigners want to risk their lives in a hopeless situation in a distant part of the globe?

FORMS OF FOREIGN ENGAGEMENT

Foreign governments, intergovernmental organisations and non-governmental bodies could become — and have indeed already become — involved in state reconstruction and nation-building in South Africa in a variety of ways. Tangible international support could be given directly or indirectly. In the case of direct support, it would be the declared intention of a foreign actor to promote one or both of these objectives. Indirectly, the effects of foreign engagement are such that they contribute to state- or nation-building. Provision should also be made for non-material support.

While some types of involvement could be equally applicable to state- and nation-building, for analytical purposes one could distinguish between their respective supporting actions.

State rebuilding could be encouraged from abroad through such actions as familiarising influential South Africans with state institutions elsewhere through personal visits, conferences, etc.; providing foreign expertise to local parties involved in constitutional negotiations; offering foreign training programmes to aspiring or serving civil servants, policemen and soldiers, and tendering political advice (solicited or unsolicited) to local parties. South Africa already receives all these forms of support from abroad.

Nation-building is an altogether more difficult process to support from outside because it deals with the human psyche rather than formal institutions. Foreign contributions to nation-building would therefore tend to take a far more indirect form than in the case of state-building; it may be a by-product of engagement ostensibly designed to serve other purposes. The peacemaking activities of foreign observer missions in South Africa could contribute to reconciliation between conflicting political and other groups and thereby promote nation-building. Peacemaking is used here as an umbrella term for such standard forms of third-party involvement in conflict situations as good offices, inquiry, mediation and conciliation. These can all be regarded as formal procedures and the observer missions are likewise official bodies representing the United Nations, the Commonwealth, the European Community and the Organisation of African Unity.

Nation-building in South Africa can also be supported by foreign non-governmental bodies using less formal techniques of involvement than those just mentioned. Particularly relevant are procedures designed to resolve intercommunal conflict. These more informal approaches are variously called problem-solving, intercession and facilitation (see Burton 1987:3ff; Groom 1986:85-87 and Wedge 1987:36 & 37). A third party is used to bring the local disputants — who may fear to communicate with each other — together 'to articulate and address their perceptions of the other parties and the nature and dynamics of the conflict, in an effort to remove the social-psychological blocks to creative decision-making' (Hoffman 1992:272). This is essentially a diagnostic exercise in which there is no direct bargaining or negotiation. Participants from the conflicting groups would usually not be official representatives but nonetheless influential figures with access to important decision-makers.

Over the years, a wide range of foreign institutions have involved various South African political, ethnic, racial and other antagonistic groups in such dialogues. While it is impossible to measure their success in reconciling conflicting parties, these endeavours may well have made a positive contribution to the process of nation-building in South Africa. Before February 1990 — when the ANC and others were still banned and apartheid the order of the day — such external initiatives helped to bring together (on foreign soil) groups of South Africans who would otherwise not have been able to meet and jointly address the conflict in their society. Now that all the official obstacles of the past have been removed and different groups can meet freely within South Africa, the perceived need for international involvement in domestic conflict resolution and reconciliation has probably declined.

Direct foreign support for state- and nation-building initiatives in South Africa, as will be argued presently, may prove a relatively short-term engagement. Taking a longer term perspective, one should rather look for indirect support. Probably the most important tangible form that this could take would be through South Africa's increased participation in the world economy in terms of trade, acquisition of technology and importation of capital. In turn, this could promote economic growth, social contentment and political stability. If international economic involvement merely accentuated existing economic inequalities in South African society, however, it would undermine intercommunal reconciliation and nation-building and subject the institutions of state to potentially serious challenges.

International sport is another indirect means of encouraging nation-building. It is widely accepted that the end of the sports boycott and the return of South African teams to international sport competitions have fostered a sense of national identity among South Africans. By supporting such ventures, foreign nations would be making a relatively inexpensive but promising longer term investment in building a South African nation.

Apart from tangible external support for intercommunal reconciliation-cum-nation-building and for state-rebuilding in South Africa, cognisance should also be taken of a possible demonstration effect from outside. The blossoming of democracies elsewhere in the world, particularly in Africa, may serve as an incentive to South Africa to follow the trend. And it may strengthen the belief of foreigners that South Africa would indeed do so. Conversely, the collapse of democracy and the eruption of intercommunal strife elsewhere may discourage both South Africans and foreigners in their quest for a united democratic nation-state in this part of the world.

Over the longer term, another intangible form of external support is worth considering. By drawing foreign actors into South Africa's political transition, they may eventually act as informal watchdogs over a new democratic constitution and thus also serve as unofficial guardians of the integrity of the nation and the institutions of the state.

THE RESULTS OF EXTERNAL INVOLVEMENT

It is notoriously difficult to establish cause-effect links in social relations. However much foreign parties may invest directly or indirectly in state- and nation-building in South Africa, it will be virtually impossible to measure their impact on the outcome. Foreigners could not reasonably claim the credit if South Africa succeeded in state- and nation-building. Nor could South Africans, if they failed in these areas, blame it on foreigners.

What complicates matters even more is that the results of state- and nation-building will not be evident in the short term. True, state institutions could be created or recreated over a relatively short period of time, but the true test comes in their actual operation over many years. Only in the fullness of time will we know if the democratic institutions of a new South Africa can effectively meet the needs and expectations of the population, or simply survive the challenges bound to come their way. For foreigners to invest in state-rebuilding in South Africa is therefore an act of faith, a belief that durable democratic institutions can be created.

In the case of nation-building, no quick results can be expected either. Forging a united nation with a common identity and single loyalty from South Africa's deeply divided population with its historical antagonisms obviously cannot be achieved over the short term, if at all. Also, there is no magic point at which an authoritative verdict on the success of nation-building can be made. In this respect, too, foreign support for the process is an act of faith.

International support for state- and nation-building could be threatened if these processes were to be endangered from within, whether during the transition from minority to majority rule or after the formal introduction of a new democratic constitution. Instead of redoubling their efforts, foreign parties may instead decide to cut their losses and make for the door rather than continue to support a process which is seemingly doomed to fail. But South Africans cannot take international involvement for granted even if a stable new democratic order were soon to emerge. That may encourage foreigners to reduce their support on the grounds that it is no longer needed. South Africa may therefore find itself in a double bind, being 'punished' for both success and failure in the dual processes of state- and nation-building.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Three points in the preceding discussion bear emphasis. First, international support in one form or another for state reconstruction and nation-building in South Africa may well benefit these twin processes. That, at least, is a widely held conviction among major South African political parties. But while such external involvement is desirable, it is not indispensable. The foreign factor will not be the ultimate determinant of successful reconciliation and nation-building and effective reconstruction of the state; the political will of the local parties is the decisive factor.

Nor is international engagement inevitable. Although foreign actors are already involved on a fairly large scale in South Africa's political transition, their ongoing engagement cannot be taken for granted. Paradoxically, both success and failure in nation- and state-building may act as a break on involvement from abroad. Rather than rely on direct material support from abroad for any length of time, South Africans may want to encourage foreigners to help create the socioeconomic conditions conducive to democracy and national unity. This could be done primarily through extensive international involvement in the South African economy. But this type of engagement from abroad is not inevitable either; South Africans need to make the country attractive to the owners of foreign capital.

What could complicate this selling effort, finally, is the danger of marginalisation. Apartheid had kept South Africa under the world spotlight, but with the abolition of this policy and the imminent demise of white rule the Republic is disappearing from the international agenda. Add to this the fact that South Africa, despite its regional hegemony, is a minor player in the world economy and situated on the African continent with its dismal economic past and depressing economic prospects. The twin dangers of political irrelevance and economic insignificance may plunge South Africa into a new form of international isolation: that caused by the indifference of powers of consequence. For foreigners to make meaningful investments in its political and economic future, South Africa would need to stand out from the African crowd.

REFERENCES

BURTON, J. W. 1987. *Resolving deep-rooted conflict: a handbook.* Lanham: University Press of America.

GROOM, A. J. R. 1986. Problem solving in international relations. In: AZAR, E. A. & BURTON, J. W. (eds.). *International conflict resolution: theory and practice.* Sussex: Wheatsheaf.

HOFFMAN, M. 1992. Third-party mediation and conflict-resolution in the post-Cold War world. In: BAYLISS, J. & RENGGER, N. J. (eds.). *Dilemmas of world politics: international issues in a changing world.* Oxford: Clarendon Press.

WEDGE, B. 1987. Mediating intergroup conflict in the Dominican Republic. In: McDONALD, J. W. & BENDAHMANE, D. B. (eds.). *Conflict resolution: track two diplomacy.* Washington, DC : Foreign Service Institute of the Department of State.

CHAPTER 42

Determinants of foreign involvement in South Africa

Erich Leistner

Many South Africans perceive 'the West' as the *deus ex machina* that will enable their country to eliminate its huge socioeconomic backlogs and shift the economy into high gear once a new political order is in place. Others expect the country to virtually disappear from Western screens. Since relations with the outside world are of the utmost importance for our future, the first part of this contribution takes a closer look at some pertinent issues.

In view of the prevailing pessimism about the prospects for racial and ethnic harmony in this country, the second part of the chapter discusses the contribution to such harmony which intensified South African involvement with the outside world in general, and Africa in particular, can make.

MOTIVES FOR INTERNATIONAL INVOLVEMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA

Even though South Africa does not rank high among the priorities of leading Western nations, these nations are not indifferent to the course of developments here. Although the end of the Cold War has greatly diminished the strategic importance of South Africa — and the whole of Africa — to the West, it has not reduced its importance to zero.

In essence, the interests of the leading Western countries concern stability and their commercial interests in South as well as Southern Africa.

In a world marked by the growing interdependence of all nations, instability even in remote regions is apt to have unpredictable consequences globally. Since a modest amount of outside help for South Africa is likely to contribute towards the stabilisation of a sizeable part of a continent as unstable and fragile as Africa, the country can reasonably expect some outside assistance, notably from countries with direct interests in the region.

There are, for example, an estimated one million persons in South Africa who are entitled to British passports. The possibility that a catastrophic breakdown of law and order could lead to a massive flight of these people to the United, Kingdom is a real concern for the British government.

Informed Western opinion is convinced that South Africa, at least for the foreseeable future, is sub-Saharan Africa's only glimmer of hope for economic recovery. The signal failure of overseas aid and of structural adjustment programmes to uplift Africa economically has focused hopes for economic progress on intra-African regional groupings. Once South Africa is officially rehabilitated, its technical expertise and economic dynamism are expected to promote Southern Africa's development through an active role in regional economic cooperation.

Vast numbers of legal and illegal immigrants from Africa, Asia, Southern and Eastern Europe constitute a mounting threat to social harmony and political stability in the crowded, highly industrialised countries of Western Europe. If Southern Africa were to develop into an economically prosperous region, a major portion of Africa would be less likely to swell the stream of work-seekers into Europe.

Europeans often seek to disabuse their South African interlocutors of illusions about South Africa's commercial and hence overall importance to the European community in general and individual member countries in particular. Among others, they point to the fact that trade with South Africa represents perhaps one or two per cent of their total trade.

It must be remembered, however, that thanks to fierce international competition for market shares, even small but promising markets, such as South and Southern Africa, are not readily abandoned. Besides, South Africa has a good record in meeting its debt and other payments obligations. The large and growing number of foreign trade and other commercial missions visiting South Africa underline the point.

Similar considerations apply to overseas investment in South Africa. While investments here are a mere fraction of their worldwide investments, Britain and Germany in particular do not consider their South African investments as *quantités négligeables*. (Needless to say, new foreign investment of any consequence must not be expected while violence and uncertainty about future economic policies prevail.)

Southern Africa is generally acknowledged as a potentially rich market. Its raw materials are of some importance (though by no means the crucial importance widely claimed during the era of the 'total onslaught'). French spokesmen in particular suggest that South Africa is eminently suited as a bridgehead into Southern Africa for Western development and private investment ventures. 'Tripartite cooperation' between Western countries or development agencies, South African companies and agencies, and public and private institutions in the region is perceived as a promising policy.

To conclude: South and Southern Africa have not (yet?) been written off by relevant Western countries. Even though South Africa and the rest of the subcontinent are not high-priority areas, Western countries are not indifferent to developments here. If South Africa succeeds in establishing a stable and democratic order and pursues sound economic policies, it can expect a measure of Western support. Conversely, if the country is perceived to follow the course of sub-Saharan Africa into deepening misery, it will indeed be written off and become an object of IMF regimentation and humanitarian relief.

HOW CAN NATION-BUILDING BE PROMOTED THROUGH SOUTH AFRICAN INVOLVEMENT IN INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS?

Participation in a joint endeavour tends to bring people closer together and to create a sense of commonality more effectively than verbal appeals for understanding and national unity. South Africa's reintegration into the international community creates significant opportunities in this respect.

At home, South Africans are inclined to perceive each other as members of a particular racial or ethnic group, but it is different when they meet outside the country. When they represent South Africa at international conferences or in international organisations overseas, others perceive them simply as South Africans, regardless of race or ethnic group.

The experience of being perceived as a South African rather than a member of a particular race or ethnic group tends to strengthen the sense of national as distinct from sectional identity. Similarly, many South Africans travelling abroad in their private capacity have realised how much they have in common when by chance they meet fellow South Africans of another pigmentation than their own.

International sport and mass entertainment by popular singers or bands offer an experience of commonality to large groups of people at a time. When, say, a South African boxer wins an important international title fight, all South African boxing fans — and many others as well — are happy and proud, regardless of whether the winner is black or white. The conventional barriers between population groups tend to fall in the convivial atmosphere of international or national pop festivals.

Full-fledged South African involvement in African affairs, and especially participation in the activities of inter-African organisations, are likely to promote significantly a sense of national identity and commonality among South Africans.

Most sub-Saharan states had supported, more or less actively, the struggle against prevailing South African race and power structures. This created bonds of sympathy or even friendship between black South African opposition groups and African leaders. Once the country has a fully representative political order, a new pattern will inevitably emerge. Domestic issues and considerations of national interest will replace the fight against the existing order. Ties with other African countries are bound to be reassessed accordingly and to become more matter of fact.

The quest for an appropriate policy *vis-à-vis* other African states in accordance with South Africa's needs and objectives will increasingly accentuate the shared interests of its diverse population groups. Once South Africa becomes a member of the Organisation of African Unity and other African and regional organisations, the racial or ethnic identity of its representatives will soon be of little or no consequence to delegates from the other countries. In this context one may recall that African leaders were by no means impressed when the USA posted predominantly Afro-American diplomats to their countries. In African eyes, they were Americans rather than blood-brothers. More generally, black Africans tend to be much less colour conscious than whites; on the whole, blood or ethnic bonds matter more for them than pigmentation.

While this illustrates the opportunities for the growth of a sense of national identity and commonality among South Africans, one must not overlook the danger that so-called affirmative action may create bitterness among population groups disadvantaged by that policy and thus poison intergroup relations at the expense of national unity. The dangerous consequences of extremist sectionalism and intolerance need not be elaborated.

It should be emphasised that promoting a South African nationhood does not mean the replacement of ethnic identities, including language, culture and tradition, by a uniform, undifferentiated mass of humanity. South Africans can, and must, constitute one *nation* with a common loyalty to their country while the diverse *peoples* of which it is composed retain their cultural identities.

Unnecessary heat tends to be generated by the failure, especially of Afrikaans speakers, to distinguish between 'nation' and 'people'. 'Nation' refers to a political and legal entity while 'people' refers to an ethnic group unified by language, culture, history, and so forth, regardless of its political and legal organisation. In the USA, for example, all citizens are expected to be loyal to the country and its constitution while they are free to live as members of particular ethnic groups with their own associations, congregations, festivals, newspapers, and so forth.

In conclusion: A post-apartheid dispensation will favour the emergence of a true, comprehensive sense of South African commonality and indeed a South African nation. This desirable development, however, could be endangered by extremist sectionalism and intolerance as well as by policies aimed at 'levelling the playing field' between peoples and groups.

CHAPTER 43

International involvement in state reconstruction and nation-building in South Africa

Anthoni van Nieuwkerk and Lebona Mosia

The question of whether South Africa can resolve its conflict on its own is one which has occupied the minds of observers and politicians throughout its troubled history. It became especially pertinent during the apartheid years, culminating in a realisation among most members of the international community (IC) that replacing apartheid with a democratic system of governance will not be effected without external involvement. The decades of the 1970s and 1980s were subsequently marked by increasing involvement of the IC in South Africa's domestic problems, which took the form of intervention, isolation and penetration.[1] By the mid-1980s, the IC was largely united in its stance against the apartheid regime. The basis of its approach towards the South African problem was twofold: one, to internationally isolate the apartheid regime — the main instrument in achieving this goal was that of sanctions; and second, to support the broad anti-apartheid movement. It is our view that this role of the IC in the struggle against apartheid, combined with a dramatic shift in the global balance of forces towards the late 1980s, resulted in the opening up of a window of opportunity through which the peaceful resolution of conflict became a real possibility.

Post-1990 politics in South Africa have therefore brought about the necessity for a strategic reassessment by the IC of its appropriate role in the transition in South Africa. It is clear that the role of sanctions has outlived its usefulness and, at the time of writing (weeks before the implementation of 'interim government' structures), sanctions were about to be lifted in their entirety (except the military and oil embargoes, which will remain in place until after the installation of a democratic government[2]). It has become clear that the nature of the IC's involvement has decisively shifted from opposing apartheid to development and external assistance.

The question may very well be asked, however: development of what, and assistance to whom? What impact, if any, does the IC have on nation-building and state reconstruction, if any? The following sections of this chapter will look at two very different areas in which the IC has already become involved. First, foreign aid, or development assistance, which is aimed at addressing the enormous socioeconomic disparities created or maintained by the apartheid system is addressed. Foreign aid, in our view, already makes a meaningful contribution to the building of a democratic, new socioeconomic order in South Africa. The IC should therefore be encouraged to increase their presence and deepen their involvement in South Africa's transition.

Second, the critical issue of how to address political violence in this country during the run-up to our first national elections in April 1994, and the need to involve the IC in this attempt, is analysed. Lack of space does not permit us to discuss any of the other areas in which the IC can involve itself. However, it is hoped that the discussion of foreign aid and IC involvement in curbing political violence will illustrate the critical importance of the role of the IC in South Africa's transition.

THE NATURE OF CURRENT INTERNATIONAL INVOLVEMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA

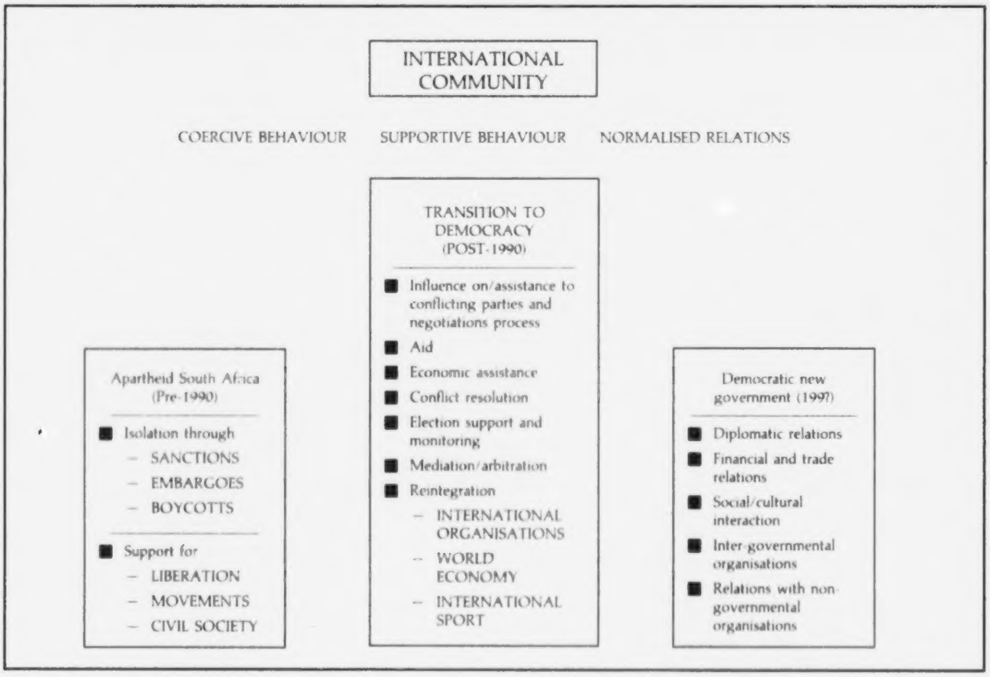
The intention of this section is to provide the reader with an overall perspective of the wide range and extent of IC involvement in South Africa, especially those activities affecting state reconstruction and nation-building.

The wider context

This section starts with an analytical distinction between types of action. Building on existing analytical frameworks (Geldenhuys 1993 (see also Chapter 10 in this book); Van Nieuwkerk 1990; Kempton & Mosia 1992), the following simplified schematic illustration reflects our thinking on the nature of IC involvement in South Africa's transition:

Concerning Figure 1, a few explanatory notes need to be made. The illustration describes, in a very simplified form, the relationship between the IC and South Africa over time. The left-hand box titled 'Apartheid South Africa' (pre-1990), reflects the nature of the relationship between minority-ruled South Africa and the IC. The last two decades were marked by the IC's 'two-track' approach towards South Africa: isolating the regime, and supporting the broad anti-apartheid movement. The box in the middle of the diagram, entitled 'Transition to democracy' (post-1990), reflects the nature of the current relationship between the IC and South Africa. The items in the box constitute some of the main elements of the IC's approach towards a transitional phase in South Africa. The chapter will discuss some of these items in detail. The box on the right-hand side of the diagram, entitled 'Democratic new government' (199?), contains elements which will form the basis for a normalised relationship between the IC and a new regime. Clearly, this will take a rather different form from the IC's current supportive behaviour towards the transitional phase in South Africa. This is not the focus of our discussion, however.

FIGURE 1: THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY AND SOUTH AFRICA


INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY
COERCIVE BEHAVIOUR
SUPPORTIVE BEHAVIOUR
NORMALISED RELATIONS
TRANSITION TO DEMOCRACY (POST-1990)
Influence on/assistance to conflicting parties and negotiations process
Aid
Economic assistance
Conflict resolution
Election support and monitoring
Mediation/arbitration
Reintegration
– INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS
– WORLD ECONOMY
– INTERNATIONAL SPORT
Apartheid South Africa (Pre-1990)
Isolation through
– SANCTIONS
– EMBARGOES
– BOYCOTTS
Support for
– LIBERATION
– MOVEMENTS
– CIVIL SOCIETY
Democratic new government (199?)
Diplomatic relations
Financial and trade relations
Social/cultural interaction
Inter-governmental organisations
Relations with non-governmental organisations

The political setting

In our view, it would, be a mistake to discuss the IC's current involvement in South Africa's transition (a process of which nation-building and state reconstruction play a vital part) without taking cognisance of the broader political context within which this process is taking shape. We believe that one cannot divorce domestic, political and economic developments in South Africa from the dramatic and ongoing global changes and realignments currently reshaping global society. The impact on the southern African region, and South Africa in particular, of the collapse of

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

communism, the end of the cold war and changing global economic relations, have been extensively discussed (see Van Nieuwkerk & Van Staden 1991 for an overview) and need not be repeated here. We do, however, want to emphasise the following general trends:

- The post-cold war era is marked by disturbing conflict-generating tendencies: rising nationalism, religious fundamentalism, economic recession, and nuclear proliferation, among others.
- A widening gap between the South and the North and the moves toward protectionism in the North.
- Africa's continuing marginalisation from the global economy.
- Continuing conflicts and emerging new tensions in the southern African region.

South Africa's transition and the role of the IC should be seen in the light of these (and other) external factors. A few general comments on these trends should suffice. Given the rise of new conflicts globally, it seems to us that at present the IC is so occupied with major crises elsewhere (for example central Asia) that one can hardly expect them to pay more attention to South Africa than they currently do. In fact, we believe that the global interest and goodwill generated since 1990 might last, at the most, until a new government has been elected. Major developments or crises elsewhere or a lack of progress at home may very well reduce this 'window of opportunity' to a far shorter period than originally anticipated. It is in this context that the two major players in the South African transitional process — the ANC and the government — are vying to attract the most international support for their political programmes. It is hoped that this rivalry will be replaced by calls for international support for the *process* of transformation, once the transitional-executive council (TEC) is in place.

Concerning the widening South/North gap and Africa's marginalisation, it seems to us that a successful transition in South Africa could help secure it a place in the global economy. However, this will depend on whether a democratic South African government can successfully manage the twin demands for redistributive justice and economic growth, and whether the domestic economy can successfully adapt to the demands of the changing global economy.

In addition to these challenges, there is another: it is about the social cost of involvement in South Africa. Here a note of warning must be sounded. As argued elsewhere (Van Aardt 1992; see also Morris 1993), investment and aid to promote economic growth do not necessarily imply socioeconomic development but might even reinforce dependency or existing inequalities.

Finally, there seems to be a very close interplay between developments in the region and at home. Should the region fail to resolve the continuing serious conflicts and tensions, the anticipated economic cooperation and integration project — in which South Africa is set to play the major role — will be seriously affected.

These trends give an indication of the external conditions which the IC must take into account when formulating policy on South Africa and its transitional process. (Keep in mind that the limited scope of this chapter does not allow us to describe our domestic situation, which the IC must also take into account when thinking about its role in South Africa.) It seems clear to us that many of these trends will have an adverse effect on the process by which South Africa is being readmitted or reintegrated into the global society. Moreover IC support for South Africa's transitional process is limited by some of these trends. The nature and shape — and performance — of the global economy over the next few years will largely determine the extent to which the IC can realistically implement its policies towards South Africa.

The rest of the chapter will focus on selected forms of involvement outlined under the 'Transition to democracy' box in Figure 1.

AID

Introduction

Research on current aid flows to South Africa and likely future trends is a neglected area. Two recent contributions (Whiteside 1991; Booker 1992) provided us with much needed information, and the following discussion, which draws heavily on this research, will give an overview of recent developments in this field.

Foreign aid to developing countries is a controversial subject, involving three groups of protagonists: the donors, the recipients and the facilitators (the intention is not to report on this debate).[3] Until recently, South Africans were unable to benefit much from aid flows. The reason for South Africa's exclusion from access to aid relates to the apartheid system. However, the transition to democracy and return to international acceptability will lead to further increases in the aid flow, although its nature will change.

A recent United Nation Development Programme (UNDP) report[4] shows that the total value of development assistance projected for 1992 amounts to US$342,98 million (about R1 billion). This figure excludes Donor Mission contributions to the various specialised agencies of the UN which provide assistance to South Africans. Nor does the total include funding from the array of international NGOs, private donor agencies, or international corporate donors active in supporting projects in South Africa. The real value of aid to South Africa might therefore significantly exceed the amount shown above. Indeed, the report notes that total disbursements for 1992 will represent the largest amount of external assistance to South Africa in the past decade. It also anticipates a continuing rise in aid levels over the next few years and an increase in the number of donor agencies active in South Africa.

Oden recently calculated that (post-apartheid) South Africa can count upon commitments up to US$1000 million (about R3,2 billion) per annum, of which more than half will come in the form of loans on International Bank Reconstruction and Development (World Bank)-terms from the international financial institutions (Oden 1993:236).

Direction of aid flows

Towards what is this external assistance directed? Generally speaking, donors recognise the enormous disparities created by apartheid between the black majority and the white minority in every facet of social and economic development in South Africa, and have demonstrated a willingness to support programmes aimed at redressing this legacy. A sectoral assessment of external assistance brings the following to light:

FIGURE 2: SECTORAL BREAKDOWN OF EXTERNAL ASSISTANCE TO SOUTH AFRICA

SECTOR	%
Education/Training	43
Community development	12
Human rights	11
Rural development	11
SUBTOTAL	**77**
Other	23
TOTAL	**100**

The education and training sector receives by far the largest share of all external assistance (43 per cent of the total). The attention given to education recognises both the deliberate inadequacies inherent in the system of 'Bantu' education, and the tremendous need for a much larger pool of skilled black South Africans to assume major responsibility for the 'governance' of a future democratic South African state.

The second largest amount of external assistance goes to Community Development projects (12 per cent). The widespread growth of strong, democratic and participatory community-based organisations (CBOs) in the past decade and the emergence of the civics movement offer the potential for more integrated development programmes to be designed and implemented in future. Uncertain progress on a political settlement and continuing political violence, however, severely constrain CBO and service organisation capacities from engaging in development work in a well-planned manner.

Human Rights, Legal Aid and Democratisation constitute the sector which is ranked third in terms of aid flows (11 per cent). While the Human Rights sector has traditionally received a great deal of attention and a significant percentage of resources, there appears to have been a levelling off (if not decline) of support to this sector since 1990.

Other activities supported within this sector include 'Democratisation' projects. Included in this category are projects which aim at facilitating the negotiation process, the production of educational materials, meetings to promote dialogue between different racial and/or political communities, etc. Specific mediation, or conflict resolution, programmes are also funded under this heading.

Rural Development and Agriculture receives the fourth highest level of funding (10,7 per cent). This is almost entirely because of the EC's 1991 decision to shift towards funding longer-term, programme-oriented, development activities and its selection of this sector as one of its priority areas.

Taken together the four sectors discussed above comprise 77 per cent of all external funding reported to the UNDP in Lusaka. Of the remaining sectors only Health, Repatriation/Reintegration, Trade Unions, Social Welfare/Humanitarian Aid, and Business Development, receive more than 1 per cent of the total.[5]

Conclusion: future trends in aid flows

How might the transition in South Africa affect future trends in external assistance? There can be no doubt that once apartheid ends and a new representative government is in place, the aid flows will change. In Whiteside's view (1991:45-50), a number of donors will cease to support activities in South Africa while new ones will enter the field. The recipients and the type of aid given will also alter. Apart from the argument that South Africa's comparative wealth will disqualify it from receiving some aid post-apartheid,[6] there are a number of global trends concerning the type and direction of aid given that need to be noted. The first trend, which might work to South Africa's benefit, is that there is growing donor fatigue with Africa. Increasingly, donors want to put their money in projects and countries where self-sustained growth will occur. A second trend seems to be a decline in the importance of bilateral aid as donors channel their funds through the multilateral agencies (Whiteside 1991:48). In Whiteside's view, bilateral aid flows to South Africa will decline, but multilateral donors are beginning to operate in South Africa. Multilateral agencies that can be expected to play an increasingly important role in South Africa are the European Community, the World Bank, the African Development Bank, and the United Nations family.[7] Regardless of the direction of resource flows, the overall picture that emerges is that the IC is already playing a vital role in addressing part of the legacy of apartheid which had severely damaged the social fabric of South African society. For nation-building and reconciliation to succeed, extreme efforts will be required from all South Africans. One aspect of this emerging project has to do with balancing equalities and inequalities in the context of global and national economic decline; to this end, the IC's external assistance in the form of aid is to be welcomed. Of course, the achievement of democracy and social welfare is a process which needs to be driven by South Africans first and foremost. However, the support of the IC in this transition process whatever the motivation is invaluable, as this and the following sections show.

RESTORING PEACE DURING THE TRANSITIONAL PERIOD: WHAT ROLE FOR THE IC?

Introduction

The concepts of state-building, intercommunal reconciliation and peace have become pivotal to the success of the post-apartheid South Africa. Since President F.W. de Klerk made his historic speech in parliament in February 1990, attempts at restoring peace in the country have invariably involved the international community, because of the racial and ethnic polarised nature of the South African society.

We will therefore look critically at the various state, non-state and international peace structures that have been established to facilitate, monitor and observe the transitional period leading to the first democratic and non-racial elections on 27 April 1994. Are they functionally succeeding in achieving their objectives? What problems are they encountering in their bid to stop violence particularly in war-torn areas such as the Pretoria/Witwatersrand/Vereeniging (PWV) and Natal? Is it really wise to hold elections when there is such rampant violence in many parts of the country? If the present peace structures cannot stop the violence, does it mean that we need an international peacekeeping force?

The national peace accord

The National Peace Committee (NPC) was established after the signing of the National Peace Accord (NPA) on 14 September 1990. Its function is 'to monitor and make recommendations on the implementation of the NPA as a whole and to ensure compliance with the Code of Conduct for Political Parties' (*New Nation*, 6/2/1992). Subsequently a National Peace Secretariat, chaired by Dr A. Gildenhuys, was established in November 1991. According to Dr Gildenhuys the secretariat has concentrated its efforts towards establishing Regional and Local Dispute Resolution Committees (LDRC) (*New Nation*, 6/2/1992).

The areas that were identified for the establishment of these regional committees were Natal/KwaZulu, Witwatersrand/Vaal, Northern Transvaal, Eastern Transvaal, Western Transvaal, Orange Free State, Ciskei/Border, Southern Cape, Western Cape and Northern Cape.

There is constant concern about the existence of the 'third force' which is allegedly fuelling the violence. To what extent does the NPA cope with the phenomenon of unexplained violence? 'It does not', says Etienne Marais of the Idasa-supported policing Research Project. 'It only addresses above-board parties and does not have the mechanisms to deal with agent provocateur activity, other than police investigations' (*Weekly Mail*, 13-19/3/1992).

In its first six months of existence 1 200 people died in political violence (*Weekly Mail*, 13-19/3/1992). The figures had increased to 3 000 by July 1993. Does this mean that the peace effort has failed in this country? The biggest source of violence is related to ANC/IFP rivalry in Natal and the PWV region where townships such as Alexandra, Katlehong, Thokoza, Mzihlophe and Vosloorus have witnessed bloody battles between hostel dwellers and local residents. In the latest violence sweeping Katlehong as a result of ANC/IFP rivalry, 91 people were killed from 2 to 7 July 1993 and at least 144 people have been killed nationwide (*Eastern Province Herald*, 8/7/1993).

Peace keeping

It is probably time that the creation of a Joint Peacekeeping Unit (JPU), as proposed by the deputy chairman of the National Peace Committee, Stanley Mogoba, should be taken seriously. He argues that the root cause of the violence epidemic is fear and deep-rooted insecurity felt by all of the people. 'No army', Mogoba argues, 'however strong, can deal with this problem. Each group feels secure only in the presence of its own police, military or paramilitary force, and what one group regards as its defender, is perceived by others as the cause of their dying. This is the underlying factor that has repeatedly neutralised attempts to end violence' (*Sowetan*, 26/11/1992).

Mogoba proposes that such a unit would be made up of a total of, say, 5 000 persons drawn from the following police or military groups: SAP, SADF, Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK), Azanian Peoples' Liberation Army (Apla), Zanla, Transkei, Ciskei, Venda, Bophuthatswana and Gazankulu defence forces and the police forces of KwaNdebele, KwaZulu, KaNgwane, Lebowa and QwaQwa (*Sowetan*, 26/11/1992). Existing police or military forces need not be dismantled — no single group would presently feel secure enough to agree to this — but each could second police or troops to the JPU without feeling unduly threatened.

The unit would be under an agreed, experienced international command provided by the UN or the Commonwealth, or both. It would be accountable to a specially created element in the National Peace Accord structures. It would have a clear identity, peace keeping uniforms and a flag, peace keeping vehicles, vehicles, helicopters, etc. (*Sowetan*, 26/11/1992).

Kempton and Mosia (1992:8-9) provide four other models of peace keeping:

- an international peacekeeping force;
- alternatively, the security forces are left intact, but control over them is transferred to an international committee (IC) or representative;
- another possibility is to allow the government in power to administer the security forces on a day-to-day basis, but invite the IC to monitor them; or
- representatives from the IC could be invited to observe the violence and make public, but unofficial reports and recommendations.

There have been a lot of developments since this article was written a year ago. Seemingly what is likely to happen is a synthesis of all five models. What is of fundamental importance to understand is the fluidity and dynamism of the South African situation. The provisions of the 1989 Harare Declaration are changing contextually. The whole idea of an interim government — the pivot of the declaration — is no longer attainable.

In our opinion, the TEC with its five subcouncils, including those of defence and law and order, is not equal to an interim government. In fact, that is where the crux of the problem lies. What are the functions and roles of the TEC? Originally they were conceived of as facilitators in the interim period leading to free and fair elections. However, as the negotiation period developed and new issues arose, it became clear that if the TEC is going to coexist with the present government, then it is important to define the parameters of power.

In the sixth report of the technical committee on the TEC, the powers and functions in relation to law and order, stability and security are clearly elaborated. Article 1(a) concerns the establishment of a national inspectorate comprising policemen and policewomen and such other persons as the subcouncils may choose to appoint. This inspectorate will be tasked with investigating and monitoring all police agencies and liaising with inspectorates of all relevant agencies. Article 1(f) concerns the establishment of any committee or subcommittee composed of local and/or international experts, to evaluate or monitor any action, conduct or reform ...

There are several elaborate clauses that relate to law and order, but the problem remains the *modus operandi* and the legislative and executive powers of the TEC. It should be borne in mind that the present racist bureaucracy will still be in place and intact. What authority does the TEC have over the station commander in Ixopo (Natal) in the application of article 1(f)?

There is definitely a danger of the TEC being a 'toy telephone' at the expense of the loss of credibility of those political parties and organisations participating in it.

The Goldstone Commission

What role has the Goldstone Commission played in curbing violence in the country? Mr Justice Goldstone was requested by the State President to establish a commission to investigate incidents of violence.

The commission has lost a lot of credibility among the blacks, because on several occasions it has failed to confirm the widespread rumours of the existence of a 'third/force' and collusion between the IFP and South African security forces — even after a former senior IFP member, Mbongeni Khumalo, revealed that for years army intelligence had promoted Inkatha to counter the ANC (*Sowetan*, 21/6/1992).

However it would be erroneous to regard the Goldstone Commission as a total failure. It was this commission that raided the SADF hide-out in Pretoria and unearthed damaging information on covert activities of the security forces. And it was the Goldstone Commission on 10 June 1992 that recommended the removal of 32 Battalion from Phola Park near Johannesburg after investigating SADF brutality towards civilians (*Sunday Times*, 16/8/1992). This decision went a long way towards curbing violence at Phola Park.

The role of international peace keepers

There are currently several international peace monitors and observers from the United Nations (UN), the European Community (EC), the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), the Commonwealth and churches who are active in many parts of the country and many have done an impressive job. A classical example is that of Ghanaian-born Moses Anafu of the Commonwealth Observer Mission in Durban.

Anafu has succeeded in restoring peace — not only in KwaNdwalane, but also in the districts of KwaMavundla, Ezingolweni, Ndwedwe and Umbumbulu (*Weekly Mail*, 2-8/7/1993).

Explaining the reason behind his success, Anafu said: 'I come from a chiefly family [his father was a chief] so I was quite familiar with protocol. When I arrived here, I noticed that the chiefs were conspicuously absent from the peace process — and you could not bring peace to rural Natal without their whole-hearted involvement. We therefore put the chiefs at the centre of the whole process' (*Weekly Mail*, 2-8/7/1993).

It is important to note that even though we might adopt Bishop Mogoba's proposal of the 5 000-strong local peace keeping force, we shall continue to need foreign involvement, particularly in Natal and the PWV regions.

Conclusion

The role of the international community and its involvement in this transition period in South Africa should be perceived as that of facilitators. At the end of the day it is the South African people, black and white, who have to resolve their problems. Can we, therefore, conclude that South Africans are ready to hold their first non-racial and democratic elections despite the raging violence? And is the violence nationwide?

We have deliberately looked at the ANC/IFP and 'third force' violence and avoided the APLA/AWB acts of violence, because the ANC/IFP conflict is more systematic and sustained than the sporadic acts of violence of the PAC and the AWB. Second, this would prolong this chapter.

If one looks at the civil wars and carnage sweeping the former Yugoslavia, Somalia, Liberia, Sudan and Angola, one begins to realise the importance of the process taking place at the World Trade Centre. That 26 representatives of political parties and organisations who are former bitter enemies are now sitting down and discussing the future of this country is in itself a historic achievement.

Another important point to acknowledge is that the World Trade Centre is now the *de facto* alternative parliament. No major decision can now be taken by parliament in Cape Town without considering how it will impact on the negotiating process. The police swoop on the PAC and the subsequent arrest of 88 members, including some of their leaders, and the reaction that this action provoked at the World Trade Centre was classic. The fact that the Minister of Law and Order, Hernus Kriel, was summoned to appear at the centre and account for his actions was indeed unprecedented. This was a clear demonstration of the power that the negotiators wield.

The flare-up of violence in Katlehong, Thokoza and some parts of Natal should not be perceived as failures of the peace accord. There are many places where peace has been restored, for instance in Alexandra, but one has to acknowledge that it is fragile.

Elections cannot be postponed simply because there is violence in the country. The solution to raging violence requires fundamental structural changes which cannot be fully addressed unless there is a levelling of the playing fields. This cannot be achieved unless there is a democratic and non-racial government.

South Africa needs the international community to assist in the monitoring and observance of peace until the holding of elections. We need more Moses Anufas, who will be able to bring communities together. International monitors have recently played a very important role worldwide in monitoring and observing elections and referenda. South Africa is no exception to the rule.

NOTES

1. These three interrelated phenomena are described by Geldenhuys 1988.
2. ANC statement, 21 February 1993. South Africa's further re-integration into the world economy will begin once a transitional executive council (TEC) is in place and a firm date set for democratic elections. To this end, the United States might play a major role. See 'Sanctions may be a thing of the past', *Sunday Star*, 20/6/1993, and ANC president Nelson Mandela's appeal for 'massive' foreign investment, *Business Day*, 30/6/1993.
3. See, for example, Cullinan 1993. For a review of the impact of development aid on communities in South Africa, see Friedman 1993.
4. Booker, 1992:8. Take note of the author's warning that the report is not exhaustive and that the quality of data included is largely dependent on the quality of data received from donors.
5. The remaining six sectors (excluding the 'Other' category) together account for only 1,8 per cent of 1992 funding. They are: Culture/Arts, Policy Research and Planning, Insitutional and Management Development, Public Administration, Media and Youth.
6. See, for example, the arguments advanced by Tjonneland (1992:135-148) in describing Norwegian aid to a future democratic South Africa.
7. This would include the UN Development Programme (UNDP), the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), the World Health Organisation (WHO), UNESCO, the International Labour Organisation (ILO), UNICEF and UNHCR, as well as others.

REFERENCES

BOOKER, S. 1992. *Development Co-operation Report for South Africa.* (Consultant report to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Lusaka).

CULLINAN, K. 1988. Dancing to the donor's tune? *Work in Progress,* April/May.

FRIEDMAN, S. 1993. *The elusive community: the dynamics of negotiated urban development.* Johannesburg: Centre for Policy Studies.

GELDENHUYS, D. 1988. The international community and South Africa: penetration, intervention and isolation. *International Affairs Bulletin,* 12(1).

GELDENHUYS, D. 1993. The changing nature of foreign involvement in South Africa. *South Africa International,* April.

KEMPTON, D. & MOSIA, L. 1992. The international community in South Africa's transition to non-racial democracy. *International Affairs Bulletin,* 16(2).

MORRIS, M. 1993. Who's in? Who's out? Trying to side-step a 50 per cent solution. *Work in Progress,* 87.

ODEN, B. 1993. Factors affecting flows of external capital to post-apartheid southern Africa. In: ODEN, B. (ed.). *Southern Africa after apartheid.* Uppsala: Nordiska Afrika Institutet.

TJONNELAND, E. 1992. *Southern Africa after apartheid.* Norway: Bergen: Chr. Michelsen Institute.

VAN AARDT, M. 1992. Building a new South Africa: the role of the international community. *International Affairs Bulletin,* 16(1).

VAN NIEUWKERK, A. 1990. Outsiders' efforts. In: ESTERHUYSE, W. & DU TOIT, P. *The myth makers: the elusive bargain for South Africa's future.* Halfway House: Southern.

VAN NIEUWKERK, A. & VAN STADEN, G. (eds). 1991. *Southern Africa at the crossroads: prospects for the political economy of the region.* Johannesburg: SAIIA.

WHITESIDE, A. 1991. Aid to South Africa. *International Affairs Bulletin,* 15(2).

CHAPTER 44

Building a democratic South Africa: the role of international organisations

Prince Mokotedi

BACKGROUND

Re-emergence of the nation-state dilemma

The eighteenth century's European dilemma of nation versus state is vigorously re-emerging all over the world. Tribal wars which were seen — particularly by the Westerners — as being peculiar to Africa or the Third World are taking place in the heart of Europe. Small and large 'nations' demand secession from hegemonous states. The disintegration of Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union are cases in point. At the same time, some states call for the incorporation of other nations into their 'principalities', for example Swaziland's demand that the KaNgwane region in South Africa should be integrated into its sovereignty.

Limitations of classical terminology

The concepts of nation and state are therefore becoming fluid and very difficult to conceptualise and operationalise in terms of geography, demography, language and race as indicators. To give an example of how problematic these concepts have become, one could refer to the difficulties facing the Palestinians in drawing up and geographically consolidating their state since the West Bank and the Gaza Strip are not geographically contiguous.

Geographic limitations in defining a state or nation will also be a problem with the Setswana-speaking people in South Africa if the Bophuthatswana government continues to insist on a separate state. This is because the Batswana people are scattered in small 'entities' throughout the country. Given the complexities of the

South African situation, it is therefore apparent that this country will find it extremely hard to escape the nation/state dichotomy that is sweeping the world.

OUTLINE

In this Chapter I discuss the role of international organisations in nation- and state-building in South Africa. I use the terms *nation* and *state* in their classical meaning, that is, I refer to a nation as a people who live within a common geographic boundary, who claim to have a common interest, and who also share a common past. By state I refer to the mechanism and institutional arrangements that are put in place to govern and control a particular people.

First, I give a brief background on the impact apartheid has had in distorting the concepts of the state and nation both literally and in an ideological sense. I then explain and demonstrate the ways in which the international community can take part in reconstructing the South African nation and state. It will be seen later in the discussion that I found it hard to demarcate the nation- and state-building processes, and I therefore hesitate to put labels on various 'building' processes.

IMPACT OF APARTHEID ON MEANINGS OF NATION AND STATE

The process of 'separate development' which entrenched racial, ethnic and class divisions makes it very difficult to put a clear demarcation not only on defining and distinguishing between the nation- and state-building processes, but also in putting such processes in place in South Africa. The apartheid government has succeeded in distorting these concepts by giving them a meaning that suited its strategy of 'divide and rule' as a means of upholding white superiority.

To a large extent, apartheid has managed to instil into South African citizens — especially those who lived in the homelands — the impression of the existence of and the need for separate independent states and nations. The development of the Bantustan system and the later establishment of the tricameral parliament had far-reaching effects on what people think constitutes a nation and a state.

Many of these self-governing or independent states insist that they existed as sovereign states and nations long before the Verwoerdian concept of homelands was forcibly implemented. The view that homelands existed in their present form long before Jan van Riebeeck arrived at this part of the continent is vociferously echoed by the Chief Minister in the KwaZulu government. The Bophuthatswana government also insists that the constitution for a new dispensation should provide for the states to have independent statutory and legislative powers.

In the same breath, but for different reasons and motives, a sector of the Afrikaner populace calls for a separate sovereign state. There is also a movement which is campaigning for a state for the coloured nation. The fact that some population groups see themselves as belonging to separate nations and also want to have or maintain separate states, indicates how serious nation and state friction is. Black political organisations which claim to fight for a black nation also show the extent to which people were influenced by the apartheid definition of state and nation.

Although the progressive anti-apartheid movement, under the banner of the African National Congress and the United Democratic Front, managed to bring divergent racial, ethnic, ideological and religious groups together and forge solidarity to fight the white minority, the issue is whether it will be capable of keeping these groups together and save a new South Africa from plunging into the sort of ethnic wars that are sweeping Eastern European countries. One can see the enormous task facing those who are tirelessly involved in the reconstruction of a new South Africa, and also the obvious necessity for the involvement of the international community.

STAGES IN THE INVOLVEMENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

The involvement of the international community in South Africa can be classified into two phases, namely the deconstruction phase, which was the pre-February 1990 period, and the reconstruction phase, which is the period after February 1990.

DECONSTRUCTION PHASE

During this phase involvement was basically punitive and was orchestrated in the form of economic sanctions, political and cultural isolation, sports boycotts and expulsion from professional bodies. South Africa was expelled from the United Nations and the Commonwealth and was refused membership of the OAU, the SADCC and other organisations which were of economic and political strategic importance.

Economic/financial involvement

The World Bank, IMF and other international funders withdrew their loans or refused to give loans to the apartheid regime. Many multinationals pulled out of the country and heeded the call of the liberation and anti-apartheid movement. Generally, the idea was to strangle South Africa financially so that it would be forced, at least, to negotiate with political organisations to develop ways and means of ushering in a just and equitable society.

Direct involvement also came mainly from the European and Scandinavian countries in the form of financial assistance to the anti-apartheid movement. African and communist countries offered military and moral/ideological support to the exiled political organisations. On the other hand, European and North American universities and trusts offered scholarships and fellowships to a large number of South Africans to study in various professional and career fields.

Capacity building

Some countries, such as India, were involved in the training of progressive South Africans in the public service. In essence, during the period before February 1990 the international community was involved in dismantling the apartheid state apparatus and at the same time in laying a base for reconstruction by empowering or equipping blacks with skills with which to rule.

Involvement of human rights organisations

In the deconstruction phase one cannot disregard the role played by the international human rights and humanitarian organisations, such as Amnesty International, which exposed the human rights violations of the prison system in South Africa. The Red Cross also played a major role in assisting direct victims of violence and other atrocities which had been committed by the South African regime. Clearly, one can see that there was a concerted effort from all quarters in the endeavour to dismantle and paralyse the apartheid state.

THE RECONSTRUCTION PHASE

The period after the unbanning of the ANC and other political organisations, however, is one of active reconstruction. This process takes place via economic investments, institutional capacity -building and, broadly speaking, nation-building. Now, those who participated in the deconstruction phase are energetically participating, or are eagerly awaiting to be called to participate, in the reconstruction phase.

Financial involvement

Although economic investment is still a thorny issue, most countries and multinationals have shown an interest in investment and have pledged to do so once the process of democratisation becomes irreversible. We have recently seen how many economic observer missions have arrived in South Africa to scout for business prospects. This indicates the willingness and, to say the least, the confidence shown by investors in business performance in this country.

South Africa definitely needs a boost from outside to set the economy back on its feet. The ANC feels strongly that investments should take place only once the Transitional Executive Council is in place.

International and regional financial/economic organisations have also shown an interest in reforging links with South Africa. The SADCC invited most of the stakeholders in South Africa to participate in its last conference. Regional economic issues were discussed at this conference with the main aim being to strategise the role South Africa will play in the reconstruction of the region's economic objectives. On the other hand, the World Bank at present is funding a research project on 'war against poverty in South Africa' with a view to assisting later in the reconstruction programmes.

Peace-keeping and intercommunal reconciliation

The other facets of the reconstruction phase are and could be of a nation-building kind. The participation of international organisations and eminent groups and people in the peace-monitoring process is but one example of a nation-building process. Political organisations have called for the UN peace-keeping forces to monitor the election process and also to assist in the merging of the various military formations that exist in this country.

Ideological and moral support

Ideological and moral support continue to be given in this phase. The OAU is vociferously warning South Africa to be wary of the 'structural adjustment programmes' that the IMF and the World Bank put forward as a prequisite for loans. The visit by the former President of Zambia, Kenneth Kaunda, was a symbolic gesture of support for the great process of reconciliation in South Africa.

In line with heeding the call for international involvement in establishing a joint defence force, most countries have offered to instruct Umkhonto We Sizwe's cadres and other military formations in conventional military training. France has offered to train cadres to become fighter pilots, whereas India has offered training in regular armed forces. As the defence force is one the most important aspects of a state, this move is clearly that of building a state.

Human rights involvement

Again, we see the involvement of the human rights organisations who called for the inspection of the ANC camps, visits to and inspection of prisons in South Africa (including the Bantustans), and also insisted that all those who were involved in human rights violations should be brought to justice. The human rights organisations claim that by bringing the perpetrators to the fore, human rights will protected in the new South Africa.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The building of a unitary state and a single united South African nation is an enormous and difficult process which South Africa on its own will not be able to carry out. The apartheid regime and concomitant ideology has distorted the concept of nation and state so much that the effects leave much to be desired. It is on this basis that the international community's experiences and expertise will be borrowed.

The international community has been involved in various stages and from different angles in, first, deconstructing the old apartheid regime and, second, in the reconstruction of a new democracy. Although the international community's assistance is of value as far as reconstruction of the state is concerned, it has only a limited role to play in nation-building.

Intercommunal frictions, ideological battles, deep party-political differences, racial and ethnic disputes, and widening class gaps are all ramifications of the draconian apartheid system which only those affected can get rid of. The international community can only be a cheerleader while South Africans engage in this tough game of cleaning up the mess.

SECTION

XI

CONCLUDING OVERVIEW: THE PROSPECTS FOR DEMOCRATIC NATION-BUILDING IN SOUTH AFRICA

CHAPTER

45 The challenge of institution-building in the transition to democracy
Van Zyl Slabbert

46 National reconciliation through legitimate state institutions
Marinus Wiechers

47 Modes of nation-building for South Africa
Lawrence Schlemmer

CHAPTER

45

The challenge of institution-building in the transition to democracy

Van Zyl Slabbert

SOME CONCEPTUAL CLEANSING

'Nation-building' has become an all but useless concept for analytical purposes. Either it covers a host of good, vague, sentimental, quasi-patriotic intentions which suggest that everything is possible and nothing is necessary, or it becomes an ideological excuse for authoritarian repression in which a governing oligarchy, elite, 'father of the nation', denies all forms of political competition and consolidates power and privilege for the few. Very often, the latter occurs in a multicultural ethnic society and a nation-building ideology generates a spirit of inclusive intolerance to counteract the exclusive intolerance of ethnic outbidding. South Africa certainly does not need nation-building in the latter sense and in the former, the concept is too vague to be instructive, varying from picking up litter to finding an inoffensive new national anthem. 'State-building' also has no self-evident analytical use. Either the concept 'state' is used inclusively, that is, assuming a compatibility of interests between the administrative bureaucracy and the incumbent executive of the moment; or the state is seen as a body of dispassionate, politically neutral, public servants patiently awaiting the instructions of successful politicians; or, yet again, it is seen as a cluster of competing interests dedicated to protecting itself from the machinations of an incumbent executive. 'State-building' in the first sense becomes an excuse for pursuing totalitarian control, and in the latter two senses seems rather pointless as an overarching goal for society. Both 'nation-building' and 'state-building' concepts contain the seeds of dogmatic intolerance and authoritarian repression in a society such as South Africa.

For the purposes of this argument, the concept *state* refers to the civil service and it gives effect to the budgetary priorities of government. The latter is the incumbent executive authority. The 'state' may have homogeneity and solidarity of purpose but, more likely, may have a diversity and even competing cluster of interests, and whether there is a correspondence of interests between 'the state' and the government of the day is a matter of empirical analysis. In this sense of 'the state', it is fascinating to look comparatively at what is happening to the state in transition in Eastern Europe, CIS, Latin America and South Africa. Reconstructing the South African civil service is perhaps the most difficult challenge facing the country. It has to be transformed to become compatible with a democratic constitution in which the values of transparency, accountability and flexibility are supposed to prevail.

The self declared challenge the major politicians of South Africa have set for the country is to become a liberal democracy. This is clearly evident from the so-called 27 constitutional principles that have been accepted at the multiparty forum. They make provision for multiparty competition for political support; the peaceful electoral change of government; a constitution that protects civil liberties by means of a justiciable bill of rights with an independent judiciary, etc.

Such constitutional principles militate against any overarching ideology of *exclusive* intolerance, for example apartheid, separate development, xenophobic nationalism, or *inclusive* intolerance, for example compulsory egalitarianism such as USSR Communism, or East European Democratic Centralism. Both have been disguised as forms of state/nation-building. Is this a remotely achievable challenge for South Africa? Put differently: given its political legacy and its demographic composition, can South Africa build and transform institutions during transition that can sustain a liberal democracy? If it can, the outcome will be a country in which no group or individual would want to claim to represent 'the nation' or 'the state' or 'the people'; where no interest group, for example labour/capital/military, will enjoy the constitutional or *de facto* monopoly of power; where national symbols of solidarity will not be divisive and inflame competing passions but reflect a spirit of inclusive patriotic tolerance. This, after all, is what those 27 constitutional principles promise.

The challenge of transition for South Africa is therefore the challenge of institution-building. Examples are the following:

- Where the administration of justice is truly independent of interference from the executive or any sectoral interest;
- where education focuses on the acquisition of transferable skills and a spirit of intellectual inquiry;
- where the security system accepts its subservience to civilian control and the impartial maintenance of law and order;

- where the media are allowed competitive newsgathering and there is freedom of access to information;
- where denominational pluralism and tolerance prevail in organisations that pursue cultural and religious interests;
- where competition in economic life is demonstrably fair and free and the civil service is maximally transparent and accountable — in other words, institutions which enhance society's capacity to become self-critical, to adjust to change and to respond to challenges in an undogmatic and reflective manner.

WHERE IS SOUTH AFRICA NOW?

The dominant mode of transition in South Africa is negotiations. This does not deny that there are interest groups which may prefer other modes of transition, for example mass protest/mobilisation, revolutionary confrontation or even unilateral authoritarian control, as in the eighties. However, for the present, negotiations predominate and they tend to cluster around four key problems:

- Problems of *legitimacy*: This concerns the content and scope of a new constitution for South Africa as well as problems of transitional legitimacy. Legitimacy refers to the establishment of peaceful demonstrable consent for the way in which the majority of people are governed. These negotiations have captured most of the public attention when they occur at the multiparty forum and the *National Forum* for *Local Government*. However, problems of legitimacy are by no means the only problems that have to be negotiated.
- Problems of *stability*: This concerns the maintenance of social order, the status of the instrument of security, that is, SADF, SAP, 'homeland' armies and police, private militia such as MK, Apla, Aquila, availability and use of arms, violence, and combating crime. This is perhaps the most neglected area of negotiations. The Goldstone Commission and the organs of the Peace Accord are reactive attempts at dealing with problems of stability. Belatedly there is talk of a joint peacekeeping force, but after more than three years of negotiations, South Africa still has five official defence forces, numerous homeland police forces, a number of private militia, and no clear progress to their integration. This highly unresolved security situation is reflected in rampant and increasing crime as well as spreading transitional violence of an ideological and factional nature.
- Problems of *growth*: This refers to negotiated policy measures that can stimulate growth in the economy. The issue is not whether the South African economy has the infrastructural capacity to grow, but whether competing political interest groups can agree to remove from political contestation issues which may affect growth and become a source of political conflict between them, for example nationalisation, the relationship between labour/government/ capital, the degree of state intervention, the primacy of the market, the role of property in economic

development. The main forum for negotiations in this problem area is the National Economic Forum and, from all accounts, remarkable progress has been made, although the composition of the NEF is not as inclusive as, for example the multiparty forum.

- Problems of *redistribution*: This refers directly to the budgetary process which in turn relates to the civil service and the *delivery* of services. This is the arena in which fears and expectations are going to be met or frustrated around services such as education, housing, health, pensions, jobs, etc. Not surprisingly, little progress has been made here and it is also the area in which the pain of transition is most acutely felt because it affects the quality of life immediately and directly. A number of forums have emerged in an attempt to focus negotiations around functional issues, for example the National Housing Forum (NHF), National Electricity Forum, National Educational Forum, etc. Together with stability this is the second most neglected area of negotiations.

It is reasonable to argue that in a fairly stable democracy there is a functional equilibrium between stability, legitimacy, growth and redistribution. South Africa is certainly not a stable democracy but a newly democratising one. Unlike some Pacific Rim countries, for example Taiwan, it cannot suspend problems of legitimacy and redistribution and go for authoritarian growth, that is, maintaining repressive stability through a governing oligarchy and stimulating growth in the economy. South Africa has to deal with all four problems concurrently and one of the greatest dangers to the success of transition is that those who are involved in negotiations have not properly come to terms with this imperative.

A popular myth is being propagated by the political negotiators in South Africa. It goes as follows: 'Seek ye first political legitimacy and all else will follow.' This is pure fallacy. A new president, elected by a massively popularly vote, cannot assume the loyalty and compliance of the security system; he cannot expect problems of redistribution to be met by an efficient civil service; nor can he expect that his new constituency will contain their demands for needs to be met. He will need supporting institutions in all of these areas precisely to sustain and underpin his newly bestowed legitimacy.

A superficial look at current problems of stability immediately reveals its potential for racial/ethnic outbidding in South Africa. ('De Klerk's Police are killing us', 'Whites do not care how many blacks die', 'Afrikaner women must learn to kill', 'Zulus are being systematically killed in townships', etc.) In the area of redistribution too the most acute problems of the legacy of racial inequality and discrimination have to be met and dealt with. Current tensions, protests and confrontations in education, health, housing and the delivery of municipal services such as water, electricity, sewerage, and refuse removal clearly illustrate the disruptive potential locked into the South African society when it comes to dealing with the redistributive legacy of racial inequality.

The political pressure on the budget of the 'new South Africa' is going to be the demand for parity in expenditure. It is going to take considerable skills to channel these demands peacefully into a democratic political arena without undermining the capacity of the economy to grow. To believe that political legitimacy is both a necessary and sufficient condition to solve these problems is to court disaster. Chile discovered this between 1971 and 1973 when an extremely popular government opted for macroeconomic populism and invited repression. Yeltsin is beginning to discover the same in Russia. Spain and Portugal were fortunate to have in place supporting institutions that could sustain the introduction of legitimate civilian rule in the early seventies.

In South Africa, political legitimacy may be necessary, but it is certainly not sufficient to address problems of stability and redistribution. There is a certain chronological necessity that cannot be avoided in South Africa: without stability no legitimacy; without legitimacy no growth; without growth no redistribution. Stability is the smoking gun in the pack — around it most of the disruptive and centrifugal forces cluster. Problems of legitimacy can be solved by the demonstrable consent of the majority. Problems of stability can only be met by the compliance and cooperation of the minorities in the society. The capacity to sustain a democracy in South Africa will especially be tested in the area of stability, not exclusively in the area of legitimacy. In other words, a democracy such as the one South Africa claims it wishes to become in terms of its 27 constitutional principles will be tested by how it deals with minorities, not the majority.

WHAT IS LIKELY TO HAPPEN IN THE NEXT FEW YEARS?

South Africa has set itself a political timetable that is already being overtaken by an unfinished political agenda. To hold elections under the current circumstances is to make transition vulnerable to all kinds of disruptions. Worst of all would be to hold elections whose results would be significantly questioned both domestically and internationally. At the same time, De Klerk cannot go for a unilateral clampdown because he lacks legitimacy. Should he seek consensus on clampdown with, for example, the ANC, they are both faced with an unresolved security situation which would make a clampdown an invitation for massive civil disruption, simply because they would have difficulty in administering a clampdown effectively.

There is a high-risk way out of this dilemma. The majority, that is, De Klerk, Mandela and others, could risk a national referendum in terms of which a popular mandate to proceed with the Multiparty Forum agenda is sought. A referendum is certainly less disruptive and more manageable than an election. No doubt 70 per cent support could be achieved. This popular mandate could be used to resolve the most urgent problems of stability, that is, integration of the security system. A limited clampdown could follow in which some of the major problems of redistribution and outstanding problems of stability could be addressed. At the same time the resulting stability could begin to inspire growth in the economy and prepare the way for a more conducive climate in which to hold elections. This option demands a fair degree of elite consensus as well as a reasonable degree of solidarity between elites and their constituencies. This is not impossible to achieve in South Africa, but is certainly not in evidence at the moment.

Failing this, South Africa is likely to experience the intensification of racial, ethnic, populist outbidding which will compound problems of stability and undermine the quest for legitimacy. Under such circumstances, viewed comparatively, there is usually an authoritarian intervention of some kind or the other. At such a time new ideas about 'nation-building' or 'state-building' may very well appear to be a futile attempt to legitimise why South Africa has failed to become a liberal democracy.

CHAPTER 46

National reconciliation through legitimate state institutions

Marinus Wiechers

It has long been a truism that South African society is deeply segmented. There is no point in denying this fact. Indeed, our society is deeply divided, both socially and economically. Sadly, these differences have been compounded by ethnic and racial divergencies. It would not be far-fetched to assert that, notwithstanding some elements of communality — for instance a substantial adherence to the Christian ethic and the espousal of Christian-Judeo values, or shared experiences of patriotism in the face of national disaster when the population is momentarily united in its feelings of shock and mutual grief, — South African society is fundamentally divided and that groups view each other with mistrust and even strong antagonism.

From this perception of South African society as inherently ill at ease with itself, it is only natural that various ways and means should be sought to achieve national conciliation. One of the most significant moves in this regard, is the initiative to establish and develop programmes of so-called nation-building. The underlying idea is simply that South Africa has for so long been an independent state that the time has came to consolidate the peoples of our country into a South African nation/state. Underlying the goal of nation-building is the desire to give form and content to the concept of one state/one nation, living together harmoniously on South African soil as a single nation/state.

To achieve the ideal of a South African nation/state, many programmes of action have been proposed and actively pursued. On a human level, many individuals and community groups work with dedication and sincerity to bring about reconciliation, mutual acceptance and common understanding. Other endeavours in this regard are directed towards economic and social upliftment, an improvement in standards of living, and generally a promotion of material well-being and equality. Culturally, many avenues are followed, not only to promote arts, culture and language, but also through this promotion, to evoke a feeling of belonging to a single nation, albeit with different cultures. Many of these activities are aimed at moulding the ideal of the South African nation, reconciled with itself and strong in its own perceptions of unity and shared values with a common history and traditions.

Many, if not all, of these dedicated efforts proceed from the commonly held conviction that race and racial prejudice and discrimination, not only in their most severe institutional form as practised over the past forty-five years, but also in their colonial origins, were the main factors inhibiting or destroying the ideal of nation-building.

There is absolutely no point in denying the nefarious effects of racial prejudice in this regard. Racial discrimination, especially in its institutional and officially enacted forms, became a pervasively destructive force in our society and led to the creation of barriers, mistrust and disgust. To compound the situation, ethnic factors embodied in the creation of ethnic enclaves and arbitrarily assigned ethnic identities through statutory citizenship, were introduced. Certainly, the overall result was a state of affairs hardly conducive to the creation of the desired South African nation/state. In fact, much of the research and scholarly work currently undertaken, is directed at those factors which impede, and indeed jeopardise the idea of national reconciliation and nation-building.

While not decrying — or for one moment minimising — the very sincere efforts on all levels of society to effect national reconciliation and achieve nation-building, and while also not denying the negative — and indeed disastrous — effects of an official affirmation of racial and ethnic discrimination, it is perhaps appropriate at this particular point in our history, to look anew at these efforts and the significance of apartheid policies and procedures of the past. Stated differently, two questions should be asked:

> *First* whether the ideal of the South African nation/state is worth pursuing; and *second* whether the past apartheid experiences constitute the principal obstacle in the way of a common understanding and mutual acceptance among the groups in South African society.

The ideal of the single South African nation/state

The concept of the nation/state has come to the fore during the last two centuries in Europe. Its ideological base is founded in the concept of a nation, united within itself, living in a single territory and governed by a contract which it has concluded with a government. Furthermore, it was inspired by populist and revolutionary convictions that the nation, strongly united by bonds of patriotism and a sense of justice, is the true source of legitimate power. In short, the concept of the nation/state became the guiding force, not only in the organisation of state governments, but also in the conduct of international affairs. From the concept of the predominance of the united, popular will, the conduct of international relations also went out from the conviction that the united nation/state is the independent contract partner in its dealings with other nations and states. Notions of state sovereignty were based directly on the conviction that the nation/state possesses full and unfettered competence in its relations with other nations/states and that it can only be bound to the extent of its own agreements.

During the last century, however, the concept of the single nation/state has undergone fundamental change and has been profoundly affected by both national and international developments. In the field of international relations, the advent of the international organisation with an independent existence and competencies of its own, has eroded the underlying principle of state sovereignty. The ever-growing need for international cooperation, and especially the realisation of the international interdependence of states, has brought an awareness that the foundations on which nineteenth century international relations were constructed, had to be adapted and that instead of state sovereignty, which cannot be shared or diminished, a new basis of shared interests and combined supra-national government must be sought.

Within the Western nation/state, notwithstanding the sometimes brutal efforts to consolidate the nation by means of fascism and dictatorship, developments occurred which shattered the ideals of a single united nation. Segments of the nation, driven by sectional nationalism and ethnic differences, emerged and recently further exploded the myth of a single nation/state. From this, a growing realisation has emerged that the hegemonic ideal of the single nation/state is unrealistic and is indeed based on wrong premises. To an ever increasing extent, the concept of the nation/state has been supplanted by that of the pluralist state.

In contradistinction to the nation/state, the pluralist state proceeds from a different perspective. Instead of viewing the state as an embodiment ruled by the collective *volksgeist* of a single nation, the pluralist perspective takes as its point of departure the individual with his or her personal rights, liberties and freedoms. From such a perspective, society is seen as layers of interrelated natural and voluntarily formed groups and associations which culminate in a collectivity consisting of and allowing diversity, and manifesting a rich texture of communal organisation based on mutually reinforcing loyalties, tolerances and agreements. In fact, the modern pluralist state which is reflected politically in the multiparty political dispensation, is based upon, and derives its vigour from, a civil society which allows and, more importantly, encourages, differences and the freedom to form and propagate such differences.

What is constitutionally most important, is the question of how the pluralist state can be contained, and indeed, sustained. If individual freedoms and liberties, freedom of expression, and all the other manifestions of diversity, are not recognised and bound together by institutions of state and norms of overriding value, confusion and disruption may ensure. It is in this respect that the pluralist state relies, and is indeed built upon, a respect for and maintenance of the law as the most important normative instrument to organise, regulate and reconcile society. It is in this sense that the institutions of state acquire pre-eminence as instruments to uphold and defend the legal system. Stated differently, the modern pluralist state is built on the rule of law, which in turn finds its expression and protection through state institutions. The pluralist state, sustained by the rule of law which is safeguarded through its institutions, constitutes the modern *Rechtsstaat*.

Applying these insights and principles to South African society, the message becomes clear:

> Instead of pursuing the outdated notion of the single nation/ state, it would be far better for South African society to explore all avenues for the establishment of an overriding — or better still underlying — legal order and to build state institutions to defend and sustain the complexities and divergences of a pluralist society upon such an order.

Of course, such a task should be accompanied by efforts to build a society at peace with its own pluralist nature, and in this respect endeavours and programmes to promote the idea of a civil society are of the utmost importance. However, these efforts should not be aimed at achieving the ideal of the single nation/state, but rather at giving meaning and content to the ideal of the pluralist state. The ideal of the single nation/state has proved disastrous in most countries in Africa and has led to dictatorships, a frank denial of the rights and freedoms of the individual, and worse still, the installation of the one-party state, life presidencies, and the suppression of voluntary groupings. A South African pluralist state should bear the hallmarks of institutionalised diversity in the form of decentralised government, a multiparty democracy and independence of the judiciary, and not be dominated by the usurious ideology of a single nation/state.

Apartheid and the ideal of national reconciliation

There is no denying that the apartheid experience was bad and has lead to intolerance, mistrust and inequality and has given rise to a sense of injustice and deprivation amongst the majority of the members of the South African society. Moreover, it is true that the apartheid legacy will remain with us for many years and will continue to instill feelings of hostility and aggression. Seen in this light, apartheid and its negative effects will remain with us as the single most important issue to bedevil and impede efforts at national reconciliation.

On the other hand, apartheid as a negative experience could prove the single definitive factor in uniting South African society in its strivings for peace with itself and the search for avenues and means of establishing the desired pluralist state. Unifying factors do not always flow from positive experiences. Often, it is the trauma of living through bad experiences which provides the impetus for reconciliation and the construction of institutions of liberty. The clearest example of this is modern Germany which succeeded in structuring a modern *Rechtsstaat* on the ruins of national socialism and nazism. Instead of making apartheid the sole and eternal scapegoat by which to justify and excuse its inability to find reconciliation, South African society should have the courage and perspicacity to learn from apartheid and its inequities in order to achieve the ideal of the pluralist state. Ironically, apartheid as a common learning experience, could prove the most unifying element in all the efforts to bring about national reconciliation. In short, apartheid as a bad system can unite the South African communities in their abhorrence of racial prejudice and discrimination and teach them to avoid the dangers of a centralised state inspired by a single guiding ideology of group domination. Furthermore, the negative apartheid experiences of the past can teach the peoples of South Africa to search for a deeper legal order which safeguards the rights and freedoms of the individual and assures an open and responsible system of government operating not above the law, but under the law. Apartheid and its unholy effects should teach South African society not to repeat the mistakes of the past and to shirk from those constitutional arrangements which may lead to ethnic arrogance, racial exclusivity and deprivation.

Conclusion

It can be safely said that, notwithstanding the existence of many disruptive factors such as senseless violence, burgeoning criminality, a breakdown of law and order, destructive nationalistic forces, economic decline and many others, there is a sincere and very broad desire among most of members of the South African society to seek national reconciliation and democracy. However, this should not hide the dangers which are inherent in such a search and which may lead not to the eradication, but rather to the perpetuation of the ills of our society and the installation of yet another undemocratic system.

The first danger is that the quest for national reconciliation is premised on the ideal of the unified nation/state. The notion of the unified nation/state is not only outdated, but carries within itself the danger of a centralised system of government, the denial of individual and collective rights of self-determination, and the destruction of institutions of liberty. What has to be asked, seriously and dispassionately, is whether the idea of the nation/state is compatible with that of the modern pluralist state. Also, it should be questioned whether the wish for a nation/state can once again be the inspiration to institute a government of coercion and force, instead of a government prescribed and ordained by a system of laws which allow for diversity, freedom and self-fulfilment.

The second danger in the present search for national reconciliation and unity, is the understandable and yet potentially disastrous urge to raise the negative side of the apartheid experiences of the past, as justification for new measures of oppression and violation of fundamental rights. It is a very real danger that the struggle against the apartheid of the past may close the eyes of South African society to the very real inadequacies of the present and the future, and worse, supply an easy excuse for a lack of tolerance and inability to establish democracy. Instead of being a common and positive learning experience, apartheid is deliberately kept alive, and memories of apartheid injustices are kindled to justify weaknesses and to serve as excuses for a new kind of despotism. In short, lack of democracy in the past should never become the justification for a lack of democracy in the future.

The final challenge is not to seek national reconciliation through so-called nation-building, but for the vigorous restoration of the rule of law and the establishment of state government and legitimate state institutions which recognise and protect a plurality of interests and cultures.

CHAPTER 47

Modes of nation-building for South Africa

Lawrence Schlemmer

> *My conclusion ... is that mankind is destined — one might say doomed — to continue its efforts to solve the problems of unity and diversity on a highly empirical plane. There will be infusions of reason, and there will be infusions of politics, but there will always be a residue, an impervious area in which men will continue to work out their destiny ... without reference to a universal principle.*
>
> Joseph Cropsey quoted in Goldwin *et al.* 1989, Chapter 9

South Africa has the task of rebuilding at least a coherent state and possibly a nation. It might be argued that the task, now that apartheid has been dismantled, is to continue to build a state that in an historical time-frame, was still very new and brittle when apartheid was embarked upon a mere 40 years after the unification of the Boer republics and the British colonies. The task, therefore, is in a sense still a very new challenge that of resuming a state-building enterprise that was interrupted after 40 years by a further 40 years of active dismantling of what had occurred.

The issue of nation-building, however, is certainly not self-explanatory. It raises a host of questions because one can distinguish between various alternative modes of nation-building.

The first mode that can be identified is perhaps the most basic — that of reconstructing the formal machinery of the state in such a way as to accord all citizens equal rights and status. This can be regarded as having been achieved with the acceptance recently of an interim constitution based on universal franchise and a bill of fundamental rights. For those citizens who accept the concept of a single system of government, these new provisions can be considered as laying the structural basis of a nation. This mode would assume that provided the constitutional system, the administration and the legal system protect the peace and the interests of all citizens in a reasonably neutral and impartial way, a national consciousness and sense of belonging to the society will emerge of its own accord over time. This assumption, however, cannot be accepted in present-day South Africa, owing to certain obvious historical legacies. I will return to this issue in due course.

A second mode of nation-building is more deterministic. In terms of this approach the government of a 'new' state will seek to employ various mobilising strategies to create a unifying consciousness or sense of national community. The Third World and, indeed, certain developed Western societies at stages in their history, contain examples of the use of national symbols, festive events, monuments and patriotic rhetoric in order to 'force-feed' a sense of nationalism or collective identity. The historical evidence appears to be that this kind of symbolic manipulation of consciousness can be effective at times and ineffective in other cases. A collective threat to the 'nation'; whether real in the case of a war, or trumped-up by a government by presenting various kinds of international or local interests as hostile or a danger to the local people, facilitates the process. Previous apartheid governments used the threat of communism to attempt to rally the population behind the state. Third World governments have depicted international economic forces as hostile imperialism intent on destroying a local population. Certain Middle Eastern governments have depicted Zionism as a force against which Muslim nationals should be vigilant and united.

A more general conceptualisation of this mode of imposed or manipulated nation-building has utilised the postrevolutionary French 'Jacobin' policies as an ideal type. Elazar(1987) describes such a mode of government as '... centralised majoritarianism whereby a single elite guides the state by interpreting the general will of its citizens as a matter of public opinion, simply expressed or manipulated'. Theodor Hanf (1989) describes Jacobinism as

> ... the purest and most radical expression of the principle of *égalité*. Equality was to be understood not only in social but also in cultural terms ... the (French) republic was to be *une et indivisible*, centrally administered, unilingual and free of any particularisms ... the creation of one, indivisible nation by a sheer act of will.

Hanf points out that Jacobinism became Europe's leading political export, usually sold as nation-building, and proved to be enormously attractive in the Third World. It was a fairly obvious choice for new and insecure postcolonial governments ruling over populations which had been only very superficially unified by the earlier colonial authorities.

A problem with the 'Jacobin' mode of nation-building is that it has to be undertaken by a government at a particular point in historical time. No government, no matter what its pretensions may be, can be representative of all the interests in the population it administers. When a government becomes involved in the use of national symbols or attempts to create demons to frighten its population, it will inevitably be creating solidarity in some people (perhaps a majority) but will at the same time be alienating others. It may even present dissenting interests with symbols *against* which to mobilise. Earlier South African governments' demonisation of the liberation movements and of international communism divided rather than united South Africa's population.

The same alienating effect could occur if nation-building is approached as a majority-based set of symbolic initiatives by a new South African Government. A certain mindset in this direction is already evident. The alliance of former liberation movements was called the Patriotic Front, and from time to time there have been informal references to the supporters of the ANC Alliance as the 'patriotic' forces, as a synonym for the 'democratic' forces. If this mindset were to consolidate as the symbolic platform for the new government, it would be a fairly small further step to start depicting parties or interests that oppose the new constitution not only as 'antidemocratic' (which is happening already) but as 'unpatriotic'. The labelling of small radical opposition groups in the USA as anti-American in the McCarthy era springs to mind. Papa Doc Duvalier (1964), the dictator or Haiti, referred to his opponents as 'the anti-patriots who spit every day on our country ...'. These are simply two better-known examples of the use of the patriotic metaphor to discredit opposition.

The negation or the discounting of diversity in the interests of nation-building has its intellectual adherents in South Africa in full measure, as has also been the case in other parts of Africa. Vail (1989) records that his attempts to interest African academics in contributing papers on ethnicity to a volume of collected works were completely unsuccessful: '... not a single one would undertake the writing of a paper which might be seen as "subversive" to the goal of political "nation-building"'. In a recent unpublished paper, Taylor and Orkin (1993) make an energetic attempt to discourage even the mere retention of concepts of race and ethnicity in scholarly analysis, in the interests of aligning local social science with a non-racial democratic state enterprise: 'By taking the non-racial, non-ethnic position as the starting point for constituting the subject and subjects of critical activity, critical social science can be reclaimed and rejuvenated as being politically relevant'.

It would be surprising indeed if the new South African government were not to espouse at least some aspects of a Jacobin approach to nation-building. The party likely to be dominant after the first elections is based on a popular following that includes all South Africa's language groups, united by the struggle against attempts by the apartheid state to divide the mass of South Africans along ethnic lines. That unity will be the most precious political resource of the new government and, in the interests of maintaining the constituency, the party would be well advised to promote an overarching cultural populism. The use of nation-building to this end would be an obvious strategy.

One question, however, is whether the common identity that will be promoted will be *African* South African or more inclusively *South African*. Only time will tell. At present the non-racial, non-ethnic appeal is sincerely inclusive. It can hardly be anything else since the ANC itself, but more particularly the SA Communist Party alliance partner, has substantial numbers of white and Asian activists in its ranks. However most opinion polls show that no more than one or two per cent of whites support the ANC Alliance, and, as time goes by, this historically derived polarisation, which coincides with privilege and class, as well as opposition from the Pan African Congress, may force an increasingly 'African' definition of the nation on the governing party. In neighbouring Zimbabwe, Prime Minister Robert Mugabe appears to have embraced the idea quite unashamedly that whites are citizens on sufferance. In seeking to rationalise the forced redistribution of white-owned farmland he appears to have gone further than he has before in claiming that whites are not really Zimbabweans and therefore cannot enjoy the same claims on land as Africans. Given the fact that income advantages among whites relative to blacks will create problems of frustrated expectations among ANC supporters for a long time to come, the ANC will be under enormous pressure to modify its non-racial stance in future. The new government could, by means of affirmative action policies for blacks (already adopted as a policy by the ANC), seek to create a category of South Africans that would at least be 'first among equals'.

This, in a sense would be similar to the particular kind of assumptions about South Africanism which the National Party made in the years between the early fifties and the late seventies. Afrikaner nationalism did not attempt to assimilate non-Afrikaners. This leadership was content to establish a large inner core of Afrikaners as the dominant national unit. Marginal Afrikaners, English speakers and other white minority groups were allowed to be themselves but on a lower rung of national status, as it were. They were allowed to pursue and perpetuate ethnic subcultures by a political elite which, through control of the state, became the pinnacle of the South African nation. It appeared to be expected from the non-core Afrikaners, English speakers or others that they should accept that they were lesser components of a nation built round the core of Afrikaner republicanism. In contrast to the assimilationist model, one could term the Afrikaner nationalist approach a 'hegemonic' model.

One can regard this model of hegemonic nation-building as a third mode, equally deterministic but qualitatively different to the homogenising Jacobin mode.

Three models of nation-building have been suggested thus far: the neutral mode of the facilitative state in which national identity is allowed to emerge at its own pace, the more heroic and manipulative *Jacobin* mode in which a common identity is actively pursued by the state and, thirdly, what I have called the hegemonic mode in which the politically dominant political formation creates, among its own constituency, the inner core of the (political) national identity which other groupings in the population have to respect and pay homage to without necessarily becoming assimilated into it.

All three models are problematic. As already suggested, the neutral or constitutional approach will in all probability be unacceptable to a new government and its supporters. The socio-economic differences between identifiable groups are so large that any *laizzez faire* approach will be seen as allowing an unacceptable, apartheid-based situation to continue. Therefore the government will have to intervene to promote the interests of the less privileged as a fundamental part of its nation-building strategy.

If the new government takes this response to the point of a Jacobin approach of forced or at least actively promoted socioeconomic and cultural uniformity, the risk of creating resistance, resentment or alienation, with the danger of a revival or reinforcement of hostile ethnicity, will be very great. The same will apply to a hegemonic promotion of the idea of African South Africans within the ANC Alliance camp as the first and true South Africans, with the greatest entitlements.

There are two alternative approaches to nation-building that can avoid the danger of minority resistance. One is *consociationalism* in which mobilised ethnic units, almost irrespective of size, are incorporated into the political system as groups, and therefore share decisions. In this case unity is built on an acceptance of diversity in both a cultural and political sense. Diversity then constitutes the building blocks for a pluralistic but united national population. In South Africa the history of manipulated ethnic identity in the apartheid system, however, makes a full-blown consociationalism very problematic, at least to the activists and leadership of the soon-to-be dominant political group. In any event the new constitution makes very little provision for consociational incorporation of ethnic units. Even the proposed new regions or provinces are strictly geographical and make no special provisions for ethnic articulation.

When considering likely future needs and prospects, I tend to agree with Theodor Hanf (1989) that the safest, most acceptable and most appropriate mode of nation-building for South Africa would be what he refers to as informal or 'dirty' *syncretism*. Hanf points to the Indonesian experience as a positive example of what can be achieved. The government, in terms of this model, acts *eclectically* to address needs in the population by employing formal as well as informal strategies. On the one hand, equalisation and welfare strategies for the underprivileged and historically deprived groups are pursued. On the other hand, space is created for the articulation of ethnic interests, and policy mechanisms and committees are established to allow ethnic participation without this necessarily being part of constitutional provisions. Diversity is accommodated through lobbies, committees and, here and there, by statutory commissions on cultural issues in which ethnic interests are represented. Institutional flexibility is thus a further way of creating a framework for building a nation in the context of diversity.

Finally, the suggestion that informal institutional flexibility, or 'dirty syncretism', is the appropriate response for South Africa is not only conceptually defensible; to some degree it is inevitable in most societies. The opening quote by Joseph Cropsey states what we all know to be true, namely that ordinary people, in their everyday interaction, will create their own 'modes' of nationhood. More or less impervious to the designs of the constitution or the hegemonic prescriptions of political elites, they will choose their networks and become (or remain) different kinds of South Africans. Like the Basques in France and Spain, the Catalans of Spain, the Gypsies all over Europe, and innumerable minority sects and ethnic categories throughout the world, they could survive decades of imposed uniformity only to explode in ethnic fragmentation, as in former Jugoslavia, once the official national definition weakens. It is perhaps better, therefore, to use this diversity as the building blocks of the new nation and to work on the problem of constructive and creative co-existence as the major nation-building endeavour.

Another way of viewing this flexible and syncretistic approach to nation-building is to see the articulation of diversity as the task of *civil society*. The appropriate response of the majority-based state would be to maintain open channels of communication with all kinds of voluntary associations, and to be prepared to negotiate the issues they bring to the national table. Space for dissent and diversity might in the end create more commitment to a common national identity than all the alternative options. To extend Joseph Cropsey's argument, one will then have the happy situation that South Africans themselves will build the new nation.

REFERENCES

DUVALIER, Francois. 1964. *Le Catechisme de la Revolution.*

ELAZAR, Daniel J. 1987. *Exploring federalism.* Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press.

GOLDWIN, Robert A., KAUFMAN, Art and SCHAMBRA, William A. 1989. *Forging unity out of diversity: The approaches of eight nations.* Washington: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research.

HANF, Theodor. 1989. The prospects of accommodation in communal conflicts. In: Giliomee,H & and Schlemmer, L. *Negotiating South Africa's future.* Johannesburg: Southern Book Publishers.

TAYLOR, Rupert & ORKIN, Mark. 1993. *The racialisation of social scientific research in South Africa.* (Unpublished mimeograph.)

VAIL, L. 1989. *The Creation of tribalism in South Africa.* Claremont: David Philip (Preface).

[illegible] country previously [illegible] for its [illegible] ment, South Africa now finds itself [illegible] out a brand new democratic [illegible] in the 1990s [illegible] Western [illegible] the country to find [illegible] time.

Democratic nation-building will be the major longer-term challenge in post-election South Africa, in particular the [illegible] response of the citizens of the country to the realities of a new socio-economic and political order. Will this new order embody the basic tenets of democratic government? Is there such a thing as a South African nation based on a common South Africanism which transcends the cultural, traditional, religious, language and ethnic divisions of our times?

To put it another way, having made a new *South Africa*, it remains to make new *South Africans* out of the rich diversity of people in the country. Democratic nation-building, it is tentatively argued, is the logical next step to fill the void created by the demise of apartheid.

Tackling some of the most relevant and thorny issues of this process is the main thrust of *Democratic nation-building in South Africa*, published by the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC).

HSRC
RGN
Publishers / Uitgewers

ISBN 0 7969 1575 X
9 780796 915757

470

BEST COPY AVAILABLE